



the peak

gentrification issue

volume 52
issue 3
february
2013

Gentrification *n.*

The process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces poorer residents.

**the
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Introducing...The New *Peak*

By The Peak Collective

ABOVE *The Peak* Collective giving a revolutionary salute to all the comrades out there reading this rag. Photo by Trolle

NEW PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

As of January 2013, we have adopted a new publishing schedule. Instead of nine issues a year (four per semester and one special summer issue), we'll be publishing to a consolidated five issues a year (two issues per semester, with one special summer issue). This change has been a long time coming, and should help us provide more flexibility with our collective and volunteers' schedules while allowing us to put more time and energy into each issue.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From this issue forward, we will be featuring a "Letters to the Editor" section, offering a space for dialogue between our readers on the ideas and current events we are covering. We encourage you to send your letters to peakcontent@gmail.com with your thoughts on the current *Peak* or suggestions for future issues. Please keep your letters under 250 words, and submit them as soon as you can so we are able to get them in the next issue.

STRUCTURE

Previously, each issue of our magazine has been built around a theme (with a few off-topic articles.) We are moving into a more structured format, organizing the magazine's content into sections. We will feature a select few articles on a timely topic set out by our Content Collective, and fill the rest of the magazine with recurring sections, including book, zine and music reviews, a local news section report-backs from the anti-capitalist movement in Southern Ontario, letters to the editor, and theory and analysis.

LAYOUT

We have completely revamped our layout, with a seamless design aesthetic which lets the words in the articles speak for themselves. The new *Peak* is printed on higher quality paper to provide better colour and contrast in our images. We've also incorporated spot colours throughout the magazine and a more modern, minimalist typographic influence.

Spring Issue Callout

THE LOOK OF *THE PEAK* HAS CHANGED, AND SO HAS our content. We've expanded our magazine to make room for more kinds of content. Each issue of the peak will include featured articles on a specific topic, in addition to news, reviews, and more. We want to hear from you. We welcome submissions of previously unpublished writing in line with *The Peak's* anti-capitalist, anti-oppressive, radical and anarchist focus.

THIS SPRING

For our spring issue, our featured articles will focus on Enbridge's Line 9 Reversal. Enbridge is proposing to reverse a section of its Line 9 between Sarnia and Westover, Ontario in order to expand tar sands markets, and involves the dangerous transportation of tar sands crude to oil markets in the United States. In conjunction with these features, we are soliciting articles about the broader topics of environmental activism (including Indigenous sovereignty and land defense and Bill C-45) as well as our relationship to our land-bases (such as local ecology, permaculture, and gardening).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your rants and raves in 250 words or less.

NEWS FROM THE FRONT LINES

We want your current events stories, from coverage of current grassroots resistance movements to report-backs from demos and other events. Short news briefs are welcome.

THEORY AND ANALYSIS

Theory is a broad category encompassing discourse, philosophy and more. There is lots out there to say, from ramblings on obscure French anarchist theory, to critiques of community accountability processes, to opinion pieces and analysis of current and past struggles.

REVIEWS

Read a zine you absolutely hated, or a book that blew your mind? Have a sex toy that you just can't put down? Write us a review! Reviews can be short and sweet or in-depth. If you need ideas, we may be able to hook you up with free copies for review.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

To propose an article, send an email to peakcontent@gmail.com by February 15th, 2013. Proposals let us know what kinds of articles writers are working on, and should include the topic of the article, an estimated finished word count, and sources used (if any).

The deadline for submissions to the spring issue is February 25th, 2013. Submissions should be sent to peakcontent@gmail.com in .odt or .rtf formats, please.

Do you have an idea for an article, but need help making it happen? We're happy to give you a hand. Drop us a line at peakcontent@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to participate in *The Peak*. We welcome original illustrations and photography, and we always need savvy copyeditors and proofreaders to help us edit. To plug in, email volunteer.peak@gmail.com.

The Peak publishes a variety of analysis and opinions, not all of which reflect the opinions of the editorial collective. Information about illegal activities is printed for journalistic and educational purposes only.

Introducing...

GENTRIFICATION IN GUELPH

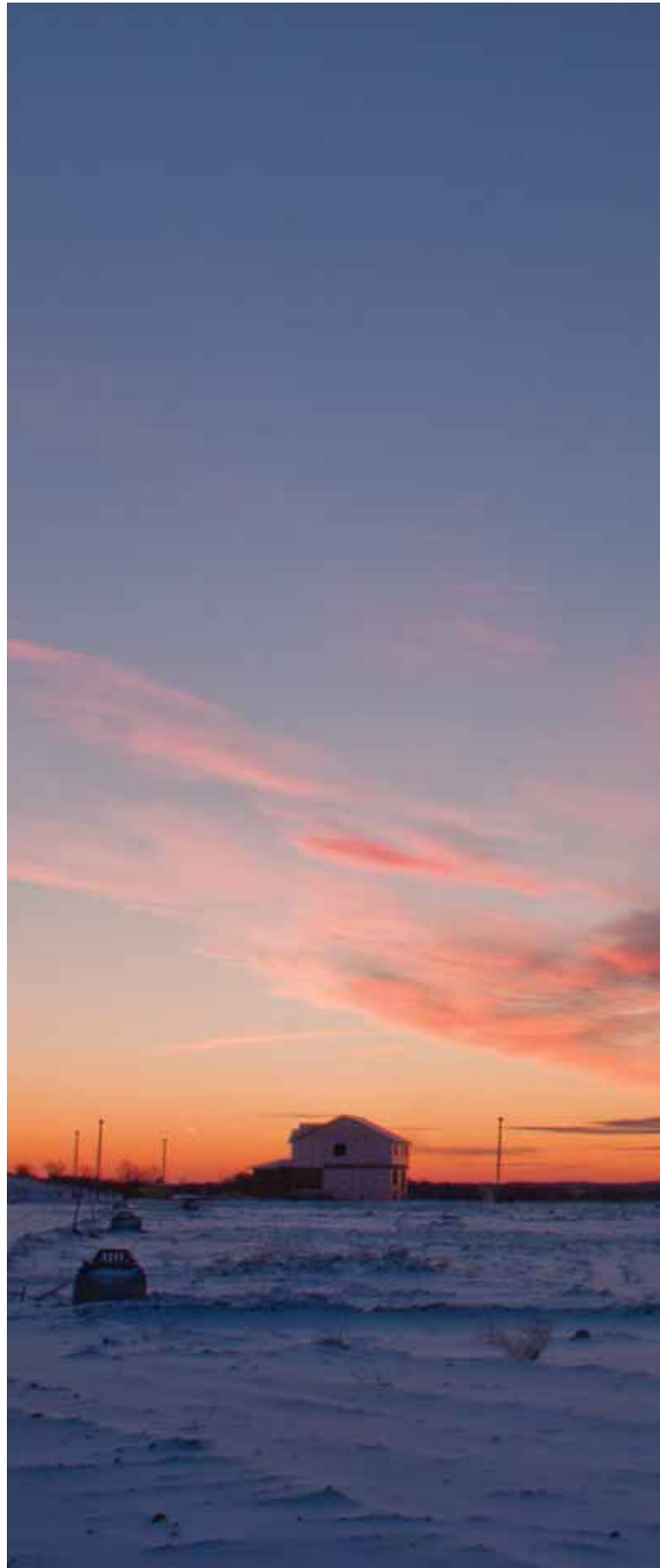
TWO CONFLICTING STORIES ARE BEING TOLD ABOUT DEVELOPMENT IN Guelph. The City of Guelph pays lip service to the idea of “community consultation” and “civic engagement” as a token gesture to their narrative that the city is built with our consent and participation. But when we read between the lines, there is another narrative at play: there are those who maintain a monopoly on the power to shape the businesses, resources, and physical landscapes of our city, and those of us who don’t. Gentrification is the process by which poorer urban spaces are “cleaned up” and redeveloped to welcome upscale businesses and residences and the wealthier people who use them. A quick look at the City of Guelph’s longterm plans for the downtown and other areas undergoing development demonstrates that gentrification is underway in our city, and that although this gentrification is a complex process, its driving forces can be traced back to specific people and organizations.

This issue of *The Peak* was written by and for the rest of us: those of us who aren’t millionaires or City of Guelph technocrats. The factory workers, the people pouring coffee, the computer programmers, the construction workers that frame the new subdivisions on the city’s peripheries, and the students on the block-- those of us who are left out of decision making under the pretense that city planning requires the technical skills of specialists. We are formally removed from the ability to control the services that are offered or de-funded because we vote away our power to politicians to make decisions for us (who then give it away to staff and “specialists” we don’t even vote for).

“The rest of us” may not have a clearly defined agenda, goals or strategies, but we do have several things in common. The majority of us live paycheck to paycheck, and are in some form of (usually massive) debt. We share the experience of watching bosses, landlords, and corporations profiting off of our labour, utility bills, rent, mortgage payments, cell phone bills, credit card payments and taxes. Our shared experience is exclusion. Our common feeling is powerlessness.

Within these pages, you can find analysis that deconstructs our interactions with this clustering of people and buildings called a city. From summer music festivals to the proposed public nuisance bylaw, this issue of *The Peak* casts a critical eye on the people, organizations and businesses that are shaping Guelph and the tensions that are present within our daily lives. The popular narrative around development and business is that everything is already in motion, that outcomes are fixed and that everyone consents. Here are some of the stories, experiences and viewpoints from “the rest of us”: we hope they can be a catalyst for collective resistance to gentrification.

Sincerely,
The Peak Collective







PLACES TO GROW AND GUELPH

Two pieces of provincial legislation have been instrumental in guiding land use policies in Guelph. These are Ontario's *Places to Grow Act* and the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. By Belinda Nasenfratz







LEFT The new Guelph City Hall. Problems associated with its construction and the Carden St. redevelopment have contributed to over 7 local stores going out of business since 2009. Photo: Bryan Hill

RIGHT The former W.C. Woods factory is currently being developed by Fusion Homes. Photo: Bryan Hill

WHILE OUTSIDE FORCES INFLUENCING local politics is not a new concept, mandated intensification and urbanization are linked to economic and cultural changes. Public officials faced with growth targets and unreliable financial markets are eager to attract private investment and the tax revenues that come with development. They provide incentives for businesses with partnerships, subsidies and revitalization projects. This “open for business” approach is complemented by high levels of developers, bankers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, and realtors who come to hold prominent positions within municipal institutions and influence the decision making process by lobbying for development projects. Over time, this economically driven mentality of profitable returns becomes so ingrained in local governance structures to the point that municipalities take on characteristics of a for-profit business model.

PLACES TO GROW

The *Places to Grow* Act, released by the Liberal government under Dalton McGuinty, received royal assent on June 13th, 2005. As a strategic policy, it gives

The mentality of profitable returns becomes so ingrained in local governance structures that municipalities take on characteristics of a for-profit business model.

the provincial government the authority to mandate designated growth areas in Ontario. *Places to Grow* is not a growth plan, rather it is a legislative base; it sets the parameters of what growth plans will contain, such as settlement boundaries, population density targets, industry location, municipal waste planning, and urban design, among other things. It lists what procedural policies are required to amend or modify plans. For instance, the Minister of Infrastructure must have the Lieutenant Governor in Council approval before decisions can be ratified. It additionally requires that all municipalities covered under growth plans amend their official plans to bring them into compliance. Essentially, the legislation functions as a preamble. When we refer to *Places to Grow*, we are likely speaking in the context of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) which was approved a year later on June 16th, 2006. The Growth Plan is a framework to manage the municipalities within the GGH until 2031 and was created to guide development and population growth in an effort to decrease urban sprawl. From a provincial planning perspective, the Growth Plan was necessary



because the GGH contains most of the 1.8 million-hectare Greenbelt, designated in 2005 to be a provincially protected green space. The Greenbelt contains unique landforms and diverse ecosystems including the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridge Moraine. The GGH is also the fastest growing urban centre in Canada; by 2031 this region is expected to grow by 3.1 million people to reach a population of 11.5 million. In an effort to address this migration, the Growth Plan directs growth into existing built-up brownfield and greyfield areas, with a focus on intensification corridors, urban growth centres and major transit station areas. The plan states that municipalities must designate land to serve the employment needs of the city and to ensure economic growth in the GGH. New residential intensification within municipalities is split between built up boundaries which will accommodate forty percent of development while sixty percent will continue to take place in greenfield areas. Built up boundaries are within the infill and low-residency areas of the city that connect to main arterial and secondary streets, and will accompany intensification through high-residency vertical development.

Urban Growth Centres will accommodate a significant share of the city's density targets. They will be planned as focal areas for institutional and regional investment while supporting commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses.

Higher order transit systems to connect people and goods within the city are accompanied by investments into highway linkages, such as the 401 overpass in the south end of Guelph, and the construction of a major transportation corridor in the north end of the city called the GTA East-West corridor which links Highway 400 in the GTA to the Hanlon Expressway. These particular expansions serve to transport economic products from one urban centre to another. Other transit systems like the recently completed GO Transit bus terminal and integrated local transit in the downtown ensure the movement of people across localities.

GUELPH

Guelph is designated as one of twenty-five municipalities listed in the Growth Plan as an Urban Growth Centre. Originally the city was directed to increase its population to well over 200,000, but this put Guelph

in a compromised position because of its limited geographic boundary within Wellington County and its reliance on groundwater. The number was worked down to 175,000, which is an increase of over 50,000 people. The area that comprises the downtown boundary is supposed to contain 8,500 people by 2031.

The Growth Plan has initiated the creation of several local legislations that seek to bring the city into compliance with provincial policies. These are Guelph's Local Growth Management Strategy (LGMS) and SmartGuelph, a "smart growth" urban design project - which serve to specify where and how intensification will take place. Prosperity 2020, the economic and tourism strategy which identifies the framework by which the city will develop and implement a niche market brand. The Downtown Secondary Plan contextualizes the parameters of an urban growth centre, while the Downtown Guelph Public (and Private) Realm Plan serves to guide the context and character of development within the downtown.

Guelph's Local Growth Management Strategy adopted on June 23rd, 2008 brings Guelph into



LEFT Currently under construction, the Market Commons condo development on Gordon St. was the recipient of a 1.5 million dollar Major Activation Grant. Photo: Bryan Hill

RIGHT Already 6.1 Million dollars have been awarded to private developers through the City of Guelph's Major Activation Grants. Photo: Bryan Hill

compliance with the provincial growth policies and designates corridors where population intensification will take place. These nodes are meant to be smaller economic centres in each area of the city; planners aspire for each centre to create a complete, distinct community. Complete communities is an urban design model that seeks to create the ideal type of living space-- one that is walkable and compact, that will decrease car usage while encouraging an active lifestyle and mass transit. Complete communities combine a mix of live/work housing, parks, shops and services in close proximity. However, they seem to reinforce a distance between populations with slines of segregation drawn according to income and education.

In a city workshop dated September 2007, there is a visualization report that shows computer-generated images of what different corridors of the city may look like at different population density projections. The differences are actually quite shocking. There are even Armani and Louis Vuitton stores at the intersection Gordon and Wellington. (To find

out more about Guelph's LGMS, visit guelph.ca. Look under "Living," under "Planning and Building," and click the "Growth Management" headline.)

MAJOR ACTIVATION GRANTS APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL:

- ➔ 1.5 million to Market Commons (3-7 Gordon St)
- ➔ \$400,000 for the Diplomat Hotel's conversion into a boutique hotel
- ➔ 3.1 million to Carvest Properties, (a subsidiary company of Tricar) which is developing Riverview Condos
- ➔ 1.1 million towards the redevelopment of the brownfield site at 40 Wellington street.

Guelph's Strategic Plan of 2007-2010 outlines six goals: maintaining an attractive city, capitalizing on heritage

assets, creating a distinct identity, building a vibrant arts and culture community and diversifying the local economy. "A diverse and prosperous local economy" is the basis for the creation of new ten-year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy for Guelph called Prosperity 2020. The strategy seeks to make Guelph an attractive place for employers and the labor pool they depend on by creating an ideal location for industry and engaging high schools, colleges and universities in order to link education to business needs. Tourism is fundamentally tied to economic expansion and growth targets because it encourages people to visit the city and spend money, as well as serving to entice potential residency. The city has identified its tourism growth sectors as outdoor scenery, downtown heritage, entertainment and sports, festivals, agri-tourism and campus events.

CITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The City of Guelph has initiated several economic development projects. The Guelph Innovation District (GID), a



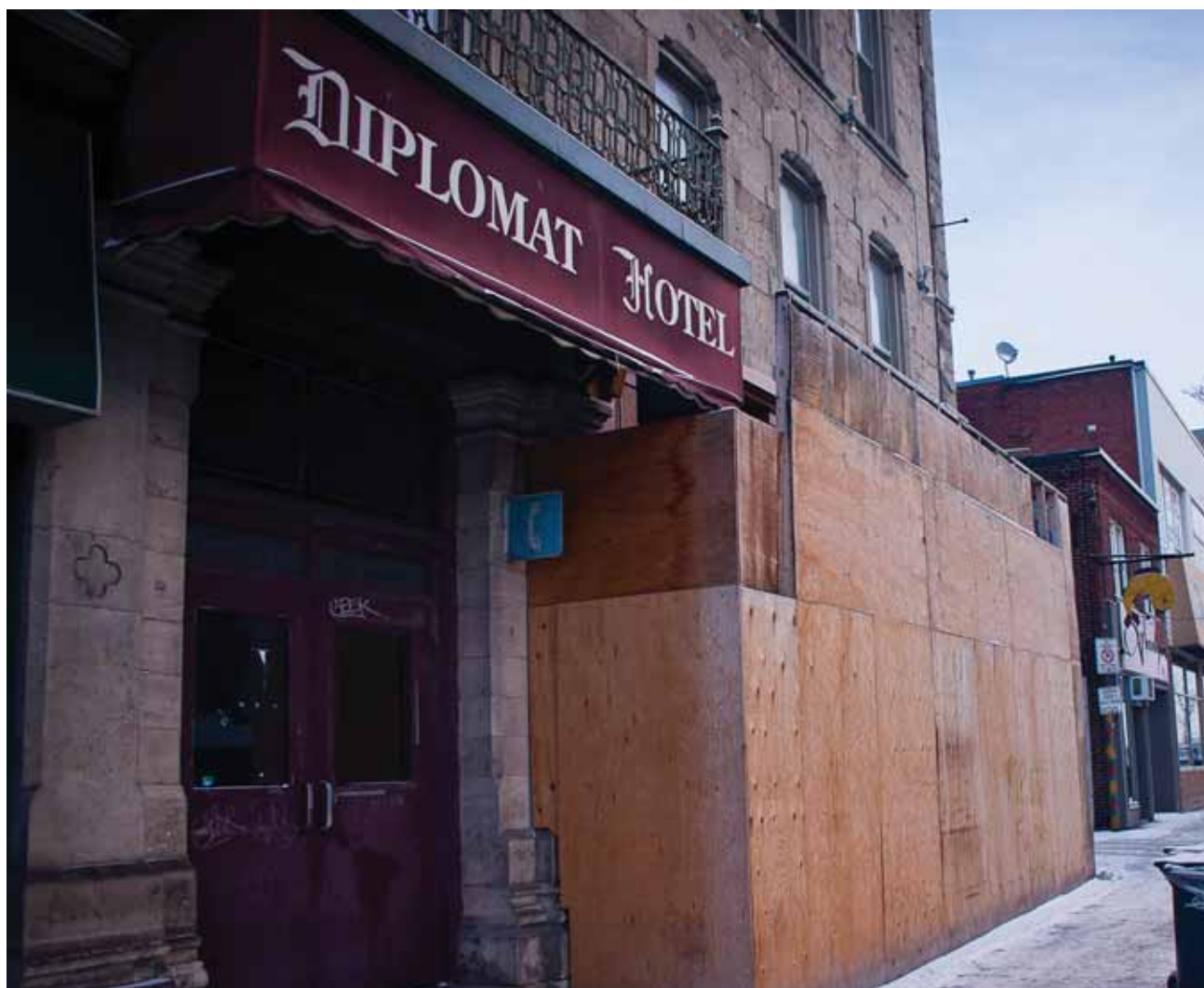
mixed use integrated residential and research cluster development which is supposed to be built in the location of the Turf-Grass Institute near the intersections of Victoria and York Roads. Intended to be a hallmark of the city's sustainable portfolio, the 161.4 hectare GID is marketed as an urban village, eco-business park and research centre that is expected to house 3,000-5,000 people. It is a cluster initiative which Prosperity 2020 defines as "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries and associated institutions in particular fields that compete but also cooperate." This constructed community has been designed to position Guelph to compete in the global bioeconomy. The creation of an "innovation triangle" linking the University, York District Lands and a future downtown post-secondary institution would provide the base upon which the city intends to market its growth sectors of agri-innovation, environmental technologies and advanced manufacturing. The GID ties local economic development with private sector

growth by developing housing, research and for-profit enterprise into the design work of a complete community. It creates a relationship whereby the city's population quota and sustainable brand is dependent on market-driven research funded by

Displacement is a common theme when we look at the development changes taking place in Guelph's downtown core.

private companies.

A component within the innovation or knowledge economy is the growth of the creative class, which social scientist Richard Florida defines as "a core of people in science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose job is to create new ideas, new technology and creative content." The creative class is a term first referenced by Florida, who sought to identify the driving market forces in post-industrial economies. It involves occupations that are reliant on technology and grounded in market applicable production ideas. It describes the international workforce that is highly-educated. By outsourcing traditional economies of agriculture, manufacturing and physical labour, globalization has seen innovative ideas rooted in intellectual property development become a driving economic force in post industrial economies. Municipal efforts to promote an active arts and culture scene downtown have aimed to attract immigrant talent and facilitate the development of a knowledge economy for it is believed that "creative people are drawn to cities in which they



ABOVE The Diplomat Hotel on Macdonell St. used to be one of downtown's remaining low-income housing options, and is a recipient of a \$400,000 Major Activation Grant to renovate it into a "boutique hotel." Photo: Bryan Hill

feel comfortable and inspired."

The Downtown Guelph Investment Plan and Management Structure Report (GPL), released in December 2005, focuses on improving the social fabric of downtown by reinventing the core. The GPL states, "Initiating positive change in Downtown Guelph is tied to attracting more residential development, creating a more successful business environment and having an attractive physical space that respects the highly valued heritage context." Revitalization efforts within the downtown have been tied to improving its aesthetic image, but that is inherently tied to "cutting down on vagrancy, drug use, panhandling and other negative uses."

Residents who live downtown support retail activity and "act as a local source of labour and serve to promote the expansion of nearby employment uses." The conception of people as consumers whose function is to financially support business means that those who do not serve to promote this basic function are undesirable aspects. Page 25 of the report states, "In Downtown Guelph...a variety of social issues are attributed to the low value [low rent] land uses that have proliferated in key locations... the best way to remove the low value land uses is to create an economic environment where they cannot afford to stay."

This last quote seems to exemplify the notion that gentrification in the core is

not happening accidentally or as an uncontrollable side effect of the Growth Plan. This incremental process of displacement is being planned, designed and constructed by people who do not have any connection to those who spend their days downtown—they are detached from them, which means that those people are not their priority, their concern is vested strictly in commerce. Ian Panabaker, Corporate Manager of Downtown Renewal, acknowledged that downtown development is linked to gentrification. For many years, he said, the majority of downtown residency had been comprised of affordable housing. Thus, the recent growth of upscale condos downtown is effectively diversifying the housing market at an upward scale. Additionally,



ABOVE The Hanlon Expressway during 7:30AM commuter traffic. Photo: Peggy Karamazov

he noted, affordable housing is not the city's responsibility as it falls within the jurisdiction of Wellington County and the Province of Ontario.

DOWNTOWN GUELPH

Investment in the downtown is reflected in an economic development initiative called the Downtown Guelph Community Improvement Plan (DGCIP). Spearheaded by the Downtown Guelph Business Association, the Downtown Renewal Office and the City at large, the DGCIP is a series of grants given to business owners and developers to revitalize and enhance the downtown as a focal area for private investment. The DGCIP encompasses programs such as brownfield

"...the best way to remove low value land uses is to create an economic environment where they cannot afford to stay."
-Downtown Guelph Investment Plan Report

redevelopment (\$16.9 million), heritage redevelopment (\$3.7 million), facade improvement, minor activation and major activation grants (\$12.4 million) for a combined total of \$33 million in grants to developers and property owners operating within the downtown urban growth centre boundary.

The DGCIP has three main initiatives:

1. The Facade Improvement Grant: This grant offers incentives to businesses to complete beautification projects on their properties such as signage and aesthetic improvements. Its overall function is to increase visual appearance on the street and promote an attractive public realm.

2. Minor Activation Grant: This grant supports the redevelopment of under-utilized and vacant properties in order to encourage large-scale residential and commercial redevelopment. It covers adjustments such as upgrading electrical units, windows, insulation, interior renovation and consulting fees.

Major Downtown Activation Grant: This is the largest and most significant grant policy which is aimed at major, new or significant redevelopment of a commercial and/or residential buildings downtown. This money is given in the form of a Tax Increment-Based Grant (TIBG). They are public investment tools to attract private-sector development.



LEFT Fusion Homes is active in both green-field development and in fill projects in Guelph. Both of which contribute to Guelph's current sprawl and gentrification issues. Photo: Bryan Hill

RIGHT Gordon St. and Wellington St. downtown are both projected to be Intensification Corridors in the Cities Growth Plans. Photo: Bryan Hill

They act as rebates to developers who, after completing a project are given annual sums of municipal property tax money. TIBGs are calculated based on the development costs that are associated with building in the city versus greenfield. It is the difference between property taxes collected on a site before development and the higher property taxes that would be collected from a site after the project is complete. That difference in profit is given back to the developer as an annual sum for up to 10 years. For example, if a municipal property is taxed at \$100,000 a year before development, and after development is complete it is taxed at \$500,000, that \$400,000 difference is given to the developer every year for up to 10 years. On the books, the city is receiving the same annual tax revenue from the site as if it had never been developed.

So far council has approved four major activation grants: 1.5 million for Market Commons (3-7 Gordon Streets); \$400,000 for the Diplomat Hotel's conversion into a boutique hotel; \$3.1 million to be paid to Carvest Properties, the subsidiary company of Tricar, which is developing RiverHouse Condos; and \$1.1 million towards the redevelopment of 40 Wellington street, a brownfield site on the corner of Gordon and Wellington.

Brownfield redevelopment is a way in which the city can actively promote environmental remediation while enticing private sector investment. By offering a tax increment based grant of up to 80% of the costs associated with remediation, this grant is another way the city is "levelling

the playing field" to developers building in the downtown. Additionally, any activation grant can be granted in conjunction with other incentive grants, so a company developing a new property on a brownfield location can get both a Major Activation Grant and a brownfield redevelopment TIBG.

While Market Commons (3-7 Gordon) is being advertised as affordable housing downtown, it is so that the City can claim to provide its goal of 30% affordable housing while actually doing the opposite and closing affordable housing in the core. Market Commons is linked to a program called Home Ownership Alternative (HOA). HOA effectively functions as a bank; it loans out or "tops up" the lacking funds to purchase a mortgage, thus allowing for the buyer to have a second mortgage. For example, if the unit you want to buy is \$370,000, but you only make enough to get a mortgage from the bank for \$300,000 the HOA will mortgage that additional \$70,000 to you. When you sell, that \$70,000 goes back into the HOA to loan out to someone else. Market Commons is able to fund this program because it benefits from a 10-year development charges delay from the city which allows it to build up a reserve of money. Despite this break from the city, Market Commons does not give preference to people on low income, when considering new tenants, it only requires that they make below \$81,000, which is a relatively comfortable income bracket.

Downtown urban design has

placed emphasis on public art, 19th century architecture, green beautification and open spaces that create an atmosphere more conducive to commerce exchange. Soft green infrastructure such as shrubs, boulevards and trees are planted to define street edges, decrease the heat island effect, reduce wind velocity and function as beautifying elements. But while the urban space is being designed to resemble the idea of sustainability the illusion is sold. Whether serving fair trade coffee and local food or selling in sweatshop-free clothing, the downtown underpins a basic system of capital exchange.

Private-Public Partnerships (P3s), which are "alternative financing models," are essentially agreements that involve bringing together public tax money and private funds to build institutions. The city is very actively pursuing a P3 to build the new Library Main Branch on Baker Street. P3s have been widely criticized because they end up costing more in construction and repair costs, take longer to complete and have lower standards of maintenance. Locally, the city has already witnessed the negative outcomes of private partnerships when it engaged in one to operate the Guelph Sports and Entertainment Centre (now sponsored by Sleeman) in 1998 with a company called Nustadia. Guelph taxpayers ended up having to pay upwards of 12 million dollars to pay for the loan that Nustadia walked out on.

The Downtown Secondary Plan (DPS, currently on hiatus as it has several



Ontario Municipal Board challenges) is supposed to embody the ideals of a “complete community,” which is a planning objective that incorporates a compact, walkable design with amenities such as food, entertainment and recreation all within a short distance. It suggests downtown Guelph should serve as high density live/work centres, house academic and innovative institutions and serve as the cultural identity of Guelph. The relocation of the transit hub downtown means that St. George’s Square will be redesigned as a central gathering place and heart of the downtown. It is to be physically and visually connected to the new library and residential development of the Baker Street parking lot. The design of the public realm will incorporate the principles of crime prevention through environmental design, a theory which include strategies for increasing security through maximizing the visibility of spaces, creating more windows to overlook parking lots, alleys,

and streets (natural surveillance); establishing strategic points of entry into the downtown (access control); reinforcing public space by including more sitting areas so that suspicious activity can be easily spotted and reported (sitting spaces also create a mentality of ownership and make it easier for civilians to self-police the public realm); and finally, good aesthetic maintenance of urban space is paramount to deter unwanted types of behaviour (a nod to the “broken window” theory).

Displacement is a common theme when we look at the development changes taking place in Guelph’s downtown core. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, while initiating the requirements of intensification, is a driving force in the restructuring of Guelph’s new culture. The very systems of control that have created systemic poverty now seek to push out and cover up the social realities that are present in the city. While failing to address the

underlying causes of inequality, and the inherent instability of cities; the growth plan seeks to make Guelph an inviting place for private business, not a more open and equitable place for those that live in the geographic boundary. This economic lens accompanies indifference and apathy for the people who do not fit within the idealized notion of what constitutes a viable downtown. If this frame of mind takes hold, it will replicate the environment it desires. The downtown could be a meaningful public space that serves all of our needs, desires and budgets. But when we sit back and watch it happen, decisions that affect us will be made by those who are solely interested in financial gain. [△](#)



LEFT Graffiti left on the side of the former Len's Mill building at Arthur and Cross St. The building was converted into lofts in 2007. Photo: Bryan Hill



Scribbling On Guelph's Walls

Spraypainting anti-capitalist slogans may not bring about the revolution, but according to one Guelph scribbler, it can be a way to critically engage with the urban landscapes that alienate us. By Karen Forbircb

GRAFFITI

PEOPLE DO GRAFFITI FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, many of which I can't speak to. I can't even claim to be a graffiti writer. Often writers have a name, a style and more of a passion for graffiti and the culture around it. I am just someone who from time to time throws up things that are in my heart. There are a lot of reasons why people doodle things around town and my reasons are just a few of them, so here is a short ditty about why I'm into scribbling on things around the City of Guelph.

I would never want to make the

statement that graffiti is the revolution, or even that graffiti, which contains revolutionary or radical statements is a tactic or a strategy for struggle every time. Rather I see it as an expression of emotions like anger and joy. For me, graffiti is a way to engage with the landscape I live in. In my experience, when I don't write, I am more likely to forget about this world and all the reactions I have to it. Every day I walk past buildings I hate, spaces that are soon to be condos, and objects and signs that represent social control and surveillance. Scrawling tags like, "fuck the police," or

"no condos" is a way to remember the disdain I have towards them. When I see them in the streets, tags remind me of the tensions that exist between this world, and a world I want to live in! I find that if I don't engage with the objects I walk past by scribbling on them, they defeat me and I get to the point where I ignore them. Although graffiti doesn't make the tensions I feel against these buildings and institutions dissolve, it does allow me to engage with my surroundings in a hostile and honest manner, in a way that is (somewhat) on my own terms.



Scrawling tags like "fuck the police" or "no condos" is a way to remember the disdain I have towards objects of social control and surveillance.

On a less personal note, graffiti can draw attention to the tensions that exist in this world: tensions between the rich and the poor, between police and the criminalized, and so on. It begins to tell a new story, in conflict with the clean, sterile streets and boulevards which encourage people in this city to remain in transit, as opposed to engaging with their surroundings.

The graffiti I am the most excited about is the kind that illustrates a tension, one that makes certain people uncomfortable in a space and other people more comfortable. This can be seen in much of the graffiti around Guelph: "Fuck Condos," "We Hate Yuppies," and the like seem to have a clear goal: to make certain people (the police, the rich, nazis, developers, etc.) feel unwelcome in particular areas and to let those who are also opposed to those groups feel they are in good company. When I walk by this kind of graffiti, such as the 18 foot long "FUCK YOUR CONDOS" on Cross St. in the Ward, I get a little giddy, and feel like I share a little secret with others in the area and the writer of the piece.

WORTH THE RISK?

You could argue that being arrested by the cops, facing tickets or misdemeanor charges might not be worth the kicks of spray painting anarchist slogans

on random walls. For me, this would be buying into the cost-benefit analysis that benefits the state by controlling our behaviour and relationships to our instincts. This is not to say that it is unwise to think about risks, but thinking only in terms of costs and benefits can keep us from doing anything. I cannot and will not strive to always categorize my actions according to their usefulness, because not every action has a tangible outcome that can be measured against the potential consequences.

Some anarchists say that writing graffiti is easy and that everyone should do it. The risks attached are bound up in one's position in society and the ease of doing graffiti may be contingent on your class and race. That is not a reason to not do it, nor does it seem like a reason to not express how great it can feel-- just a reason to not paint it as a necessary aspect of being a radical.

In short, graffiti is about engaging with my landscape and neighbourhood in a way that is a little more on my terms. It's a way of making some people feel comfortable in an area, and making others feel unwelcome. It is a way to defy a bit of the control this world has over my desires/instincts and how I engage with them. [△](#)



LEFT PAGE “fuck the pigs” and “Ward Pride” graffiti left on the side of the former W.C. Woods factory in the Ward. Photos: Peggy K.

ABOVE LEFT Nietzsche stencil near Goldie Mills Park. Photo: guelphgraffitiblog.wordpress.com

ABOVE RIGHT “Some of us are missing when some of us are jailed.” Photo: Peggy K.

ABOVE CENTRE “Thats how they get us, trap us, by making us too scared to breathe too scared to fight.” (Don’t give up.) Photo: Peggy K.

FOLLOWING SPREAD Graffiti found around the Ward and Downtown. Photos: Peggy K, Ryan Parkin & ...

FOR THE KICKS

Life in this society being at best an utter bore and few aspects of society being at all relevant to my vision of the world, what is left is for civic-minded, responsible, thrill-seeking people such as myself to overthrow the government, eliminate capital, party in the streets and do some graffiti.

Graffiti is a big kick. I like cruising on my bike to the periphery of town with a few cans in my pockets, racing away from my tags with my heart full of mischief and delight; I like hearing my friends high-five about graffiti they’ve seen and loved; I even like the inevitable drips from spray cans that end up on my clothes and shoes. I’ve experimented with stencils, paint, and markers, but my preferred technique for street art is wheatpaste. I like the precision and control I can exercise over what I’m saying and how I present it. I like rolling through the streets with a pile of posters and a

jar of wheatpaste in a grocery bag, completely anonymous and non-descript. I have pasted cute hand-lettered posters denouncing police presence in my neighborhood, “how to wheatpaste” flyers, and love notes to my friends.

When we move through spaces, we “read” them just as we read a page of text. We absorb signs, structures, and meanings that tell us how to move, and, more subtly, dictate how we relate to our environment. Graffiti lets us rewrite our landscapes. Not every wheatpaste mission I go on is explicitly political, but I do think that even non-political graffiti interrupts our notions of space in ways that are challenging, interesting and joyful.

—Marsha





GUELPH: A CITY FOR US

The systematic displacement of marginalized populations is just a part of the complex web of factors at play in the gentrification of Guelph. By Ryan Parkin

GENTRIFICATION IN GUELPH





RIGHT With 23 factories operating in Guelph, Linamar is currently Guelph's largest employer, and expanding internationally. Photo: Bryan Hill

INTRODUCTION

I ASK CHRIS, "WHY DO YOU OFTEN SIT HERE?" REFERRING to the benches in St. George's Square. The temperature is just above zero today. "I like chilling here with friends. It doesn't cost anything and I'm banned from the mall." "Why not go somewhere else?" I ask again. "Aren't you cold?"

"Where else do you want me to go? The shelter's closed till later, and I can't sit in 40 Baker all day." I think about the spaces Chris is allowed to be in the city: which areas are hostile to his presence and his over 7,000 dollars worth of accumulated by-law and police infraction tickets. He is nineteen, and inhabits a different city than I do even though we walk the same streets.

Many people hold the belief that Guelph is principally a white and rich city. However, when we pick apart the raced and classed employment opportunities and neighbourhoods from Willow West and Brant Ave. to the South-end, another picture develops: Guelph is a divided city. People of colour and poor people reside and work largely in the periphery, while the downtown and University largely cater to white and middle class populations.

often re-allocated. Cuts to public park pools and wading pools where families can take their children for free entertainment are negotiated as a potential cost-saver; snow removal on sidewalks, which largely affects disabled and elderly populations associated with higher poverty rates, is threatened; and this year, axing the subsidized bus pass program and a bus fare hike seemingly aimed at punishing low-income people were up for debate. What were not being discussed were the raises in the police budget, the corporate welfare policy the City of Guelph has instituted for rich landowners in the form of development grants and incentives, and the public funding of an organization which acts as a corporate lobby group to divert taxpayer funding to corporations. What does all this look like? The Tricor Corporation was given a 1.3 million dollar Major Downtown Activation Grant by the City Of Guelph to build luxury condominiums selling penthouse suites for up to 1 million dollars, while the City negotiated defunding the subsidized bus-pass for low-income people to save 271,000 dollars.

"Many people hold the belief that Guelph is principally a white and rich city. However, when we pick apart the raced and classed employment opportunities and neighbourhoods from the Willow West and Brant to the South-end, another picture develops: Guelph is a divided city."

YOU ARE WHAT YOU DO

The race/class and core/peripheral divide can be most illuminated by work. Employment opportunities shape the composition of Guelph because employment and wage dictate where one lives, and what one can access in terms of entertainment and commercial products. Guelph's workforce is primarily based in manufacturing sectors which employ 24.3% of the population.¹ In 2011, Linamar was Guelph's largest employer by a wide margin, employing 12,000 people.² The vast majority of workers in Linamar are people of colour, which is true of Synnex and Maple Leaf Foods as well. In the last several years, Linamar has been known for wage freezes, wage caps, long shifts, dangerous conditions, and a large flexible workforce in the form of temp workers and short term contract employees. The company has earned record profits and the Linamar

The people who are most often taking up space in the newspaper, the mass majority of the police force, almost all people with economic, bureaucratic, political and medical power are white and middle class or richer. The dynamic of geographic class divisions can be seen in the role of local law enforcement, who heavily police the north-end while largely servicing the south-side.

GUELPH FOR US?

Every year the City of Guelph's Operating Budget gets renegotiated in an attempt to control tax inflation. It is the social services Guelph provides to poor people which find themselves on the list of expendable items year after year. The ninety-six new social housing units Guelph is supposed to develop each year usually do not materialise, and the money earmarked for new social housing is

¹ City of Guelph Website
Business > Economic
Development Office
> Growth Sectors >
Advanced Manufacturing
Section.
<http://tinyurl.com/abfvwsc>

² "Linamar is Guelph's
biggest employer
- by far, as this news
report suggests," *Guelph
Mercury*
<http://tinyurl.com/aqp26lh>



stock has risen 70% in the last decade.³ Linamar's CEO Linda Hasenfratz made almost 2.75 million dollar in compensation in the year 2011.⁴ Many of Hasenfratz's workers are comprised of people from Guelph's lowest income neighbourhoods, like West Willow, Willow, Brant Ave and Ward One ("the Ward"). While gossip abounds about dangerous conditions and injured workers at Linamar's factories, the newspapers remain eerily silent.

The fourth largest Guelph employer is meat-packing conglomerate Cargill, which employs 1,500 people.⁵ The Cargill labour force is largely composed of a predominantly racialized working-class population in an industry notorious for low-wages and difficult, dangerous work. Many employees from this factory live on the growing eastern periphery of Guelph. On November 21st 2012, a Cargill press release announced that it would outsource the company's transportation drivers and proceeded to lay off fifty salaried unionized workers in Guelph. The press-release states, "The decision was based on Cargill's commitment to operate its business in a cost competitive manner, allowing for greater flexibility and efficiency in the marketplace."⁶

The second and third largest employers are the City of Guelph and the University of Guelph, both seeming to offer middle class work to a predominantly white workforce, and both occupying

the centre of the City.⁷ The hospitality workers at the University of Guelph represent a divergent class/race exception to this rule. Guelph is a divided city, or, we could say, many cities within one boundary. The streets, the businesses, our neighbourhoods, and the downtown can be interpreted as hostile or comfortable, depending on one's social position. Currently the city is being shaped in unequal ways to benefit the richer populations, but it doesn't have to be this way. We too can shape our city.

"I work 14-16 hours a day so I can pay the rent on this place. My life is sad right now, but our food makes people so happy, and in turn that makes me happy." - Downtown takeout restaurant owner

MEET THE NEW DOWNTOWN

Guelph's downtown was built by working class immigrants, largely from Italian, Polish, Portuguese, English and Irish backgrounds. The heritage buildings that help define the culture of downtown were made from quarried limestone dug out by prisoners,

³Linamar's drive to \$10-billion" Globe and Mail Aug. 23rd, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/a4s3mkk>

⁴Bloomberg Businessweek. Executive Profile. Linda S. Hasenfratz Newton <http://tinyurl.com/bdwho37>

⁵"Linamar is Guelph's biggest employer - by far, new report suggests" Guelph Mercury Oct. 24th, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/aqp26lh>

⁶Cargill to outsource its transportation needs at its Guelph meat processing facility <http://tinyurl.com/b38u9dy>

⁷"Linamar is Guelph's biggest employer - by far, new report suggests" Guelph Mercury Oct. 24th, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/aqp26lh>



LEFT Where The Family Thrift Store used to serve low income people is now the site of a new parking lot pictured here. Photo: Bryan Hill

RIGHT Fusion Homes, a local developer which develops mostly sprawling subdivisions, moved their headquarters to the Hanlon Creek Business Park in the summer of 2012. Photo: Bryan Hill

or hard working miners around Guelph. The Grand Trunk Railroad facilitated themigration of many rail-workers, manufacturing workers and paupers alike. The city has always had a history that involved people of different classes, ethnicities, sub-cultures and religions all intermingling or at least sharing space. In a real sense, the power of the downtown has been its diversity.

Our sense of connection with the downtown does not just come from its history, but our current relationships with its inhabitants and familiarities. It is in the faces of the bus-driver who drops us off everyday, the folks sitting on the benches we say "hi" to, the place we pick up harm reduction supplies to soften the blows of our addictions, the cheap movie theatre we go to on our first dates, the long-established places to get a cheap cup of coffee, the old graffiti we walk by every day. The downtown is just where we end up. That is why, whether we like it or not we are in a struggle to fight for the downtown. Not the downtown of the past or the future, but the downtown of our desires and needs. It is a fight to defend what little resources we have and build resources, institutions and communities that bring us comfort, safety, fulfill meaning in our lives and meet our necessities. In short, a downtown that is for everyone.

Things have changed in the last few years and changes cannot be seen in one event. A complete restructuring in less than a decade has transformed

Guelph's downtown into a place almost exclusively made to service the high-income and largely white portion of the City. In the last year, for instance fifteen new businesses opened in the downtown all aimed at high-income residents.⁸ Ownership has concentrated in the hands of a relative few, with Tom Lammer, Tony Di Battista, Conrad Aikens, Skyline, Matais Reality, Milan Lisac, Tom Dowd and Gary Grewal owning the majority of the real-estate. These people are essentially able to dictate rental pricing. In 2013, the cost of a 1000 sq foot ground floor rental in the downtown ballparks at over 2000 dollar a month, effectively removing the possibility of low-income shops and services through inflated rents. At the same time, rentals and services for low-income people have been moved out of the downtown, leaving the remaining services and affordable rental units under threat.

"They evicted everyone on welfare from 90 Carden Street. I am staying on a friends couch on Speedvale." -A formerly downtown low-income Guelph resident in September 2012.

THE PUSH FACTOR

Earlier this year, a mass eviction of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works recipients from the 90 Carden Street apartments occurred after a change of ownership.⁹ After a fire, 31 Gordon Street was converted from subsidized housing to high-income rental units double the amount they previously rented for.¹⁰ The Diplomat has been undergoing renovations

Ownership [of downtown] has concentrated in the hands of a relative few, with Tom Lammer, Tony Di Battista, Conrad Aikens, Skyline, Matais Reality, Milan Lisac, Tom Dowd and Gary Grewal owning the majority of the real-estate.

OAn observation made by an employee of the DGBA.

OFor more information, speak with Sister Christine of the Welcome-In Drop In who was involved in the housing arrangement. Or Ed Pickersgill of 40 Baker Street.

10Guelph apartment block goes from run-down to upscale" Guelph Mercury Aug. 31st, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/bhvuex4>



with City funding to convert its low-income hotel apartments downtown to a twenty room high-end boutique hotel. The city evicted approximately 30 affordable apartments on North Wyndham with rents between 550 dollars and 750 dollars. The Family Thrift Store and two other buildings were turned into a temporary parking lot last year. The City cited a breach in building code because the apartments did not have an elevator, however, most apartments on Wyndham also do not have an elevator. The City of Guelph is planning to convert the parking lot into an entrance road for a municipally-funded, 200 unit condominium project dubbed the Baker Street Redevelopment. Although Guelph has policy against conversion of low-income housing into condominium units, their position is that they are not replacing these apartments, but demolishing them. The 30 units constituted a significant stock of affordable housing in the downtown.¹¹ Formerly a low-income building, The Gummer Building on 1 Douglas street in St. George's Square, re-opened this winter with 18 luxury apartments and a high-end pizza restaurant called Buon Gusto.

"They moved the Salvation Army out of the downtown, The Welcome In Drop-In Center out of the downtown and they are trying to shut us down next." - A downtown social service provider

WHO'S MOVING IN

Despite vigorous and seemingly unanimous protest from Ward One residents, one third of the Ward has been annexed into Downtown, just in time for Fusion homes to redevelop the former Woods factory at 5 Arthur Street into a gargantuan 600-unit condominium expansion with mixed commercial space. Despite no buildings being erected yet, this development has already cost taxpayers three quarters of a million dollars in taxpayer-funded development incentives.¹² The Skyline Group has just renovated apartments on Yarmouth into Condominiums and they are largely sold. In regards to the Baker Street re-development, the City of Guelph has appealed to divert funds in the name

11 "Wyndham Street tenants get cash to vacate apartments." 59 Carden St. Blog (Article and comments) <http://tinyurl.com/adul85k>

12 "SLAPP Suits And High Rise Condos Coming Soon" Royal City Rag July 3rd, 2010 <http://tinyurl.com/acazqvx>



of a new downtown library. The City rarely highlights that the project is a private-public partnership, with the public subsidizing condominium units and mixed commercial space. The luxury RiverHouse Condominium development on the corner of Woolwich and Macdonell is poised to sell off its 130 units this year. Luckily, the new GO Transit hub will provide Guelph bedroom-community residents the opportunity to live in and around the downtown and commute to Toronto every day. The new GO makes it more convenient to travel to Toronto than Guelph's South-end developments. It appears as if the development initiatives of the Guelph City bureaucrats and developers are aimed at a middle-to upper-class clientele.

"There are now seven businesses gone just on the one block closest to City Hall alone. That's about a 30% vacancy rate. It isn't an ebb-and-flow, it is a full-fledged slaughter." - Downtown merchant retorting to Marty Williams comments about Carden Street ¹³

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The City of Guelph has budgeted 33 million dollars for grants and incentives between 2013 and 2017. The approach so far has been to evict the low-income populations and populate the downtown with high-income residents, but can this fantasy really be achieved? The problem is that a large portion of the population of Guelph cannot afford

ABOVE the Go Transit Terminal in downtown will help to further solidify Guelph's reputation as a commuter city.
Photo: Bryan Hill

¹³"Downtown merchant 'just tired of being bitter' as end nears" *Guelph Mercury* Jan. 4th, 2013 (comments) <http://tinyurl.com/b45lbqt>

the 16 hair salons in the downtown, or the many spas and the high-end restaurants. The experiment seems to be failing to a degree to with a rash of vacancies from untenable rents on the taxpayer-funded, newly redesigned Carden Street Market Square. People pay property taxes indirectly by paying rent, or directly through home ownership. It seems counter-intuitive that large portions of the Guelph population would want to subsidize a type of development that excludes them.

"When you see a pawn shop turn into The Works Burgers, a bike shop turn into a nice restaurant and the Diplomat turn into a nice boutique hotel, it's another indication of the way things are trending."
-Marty Williams, Executive Director of the DGBA.

ENTER THE DOWNTOWN GUELPH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Downtown Guelph Business Association (DGBA) acts as a publicly funded lobby group for large businesses in the downtown. With over 400,000 dollars in public funding and several hundred thousand in private investment, the DGBA boasts a 2013 total budget of over 700,000 dollars. They are funded through a tax levy on downtown properties in the Business Improvement Area (BIA) which increases the cost of operating for local businesses for merchants. Executive director Marty Williams



has been very vocal in local media over the last few years in support of stronger policing efforts, not placing tax levies on bar owners and in support of development for high-income populations. The DGBA's crowning achievements to date have been the successful lobbying of the City for Downtown Police Liaison Officers, and lobbying for the Major and Minor Downtown Activation Grant and Urban Renewal Grants under the 2010 Downtown Guelph Community Improvement Plan (DGCIP). The Major Downtown Activation Grant is worth 12.5 million dollar in downtown development incentives.

A close inspection of the DGBA board and the City of Guelph staff reveals an uncomfortable proximity to City of Guelph fund allocations. Ian Panabaker, General Manager of Downtown Renewal for the City of Guelph, also sits on the DGBA board. Who has received Minor and Major Downtown Activation Grants? DGBA member Tony di Battista, (owner of Trappers Alley, The Palace, Bobby O'Briens, McCabe's, Guelph Concert Hall, Tabu and Opus Lounge) received a 400,000 dollar grant for converting the formerly low-income Diplomat into a "boutique hotel" using a numbered corporation 536357 Ontario Inc instead of his conglomerate Partytown INC. A June 8th, 2012 *Guelph Mercury* article about the grant makes no mention of the fact that di Battista sits on the DGBA board, and is filled with praises from DGBA board President Marty Williams.¹⁴ Ian Panabaker presented the applications

14 "Extreme makeover for downtown Guelph hotel" *Guelph Mercury* June 8th, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/adp7rdc>

15 "Guelph councillors approve 18-storey condo tower downtown" *Guelph Mercury* May 8th, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/akuhnx7>

16 "Guelph tax-based grants benefit everyone, Farbridge asserts" *Guelph Mercury* July 10th, 2012 <http://tinyurl.com/byykh8>

for the grant to City Council and offered clarifications on June 25th 2012.

On May 7th 2012, City councillors approved the 18-storey Tricor luxury condominium project called RiverHouse. A review of the *Guelph Mercury* article on May 8th 2012 reveals that many of the seemingly unrelated pro-condo development delegations were actually all members of the DGBA board. Among those cited in the article are City Councillor Jim Furfaro, Tom Lammer, owner of the Old Quebec Street Shops, and Barbara Turley-McIntyre of The Co-operators.¹⁵ RiverHouse successfully received 1.3 million dollar from a Major Downtown Activation Grant, and in July, 2012 members of the corporate administration, finance and enterprise committee at City Hall voted to approve a combination of 3.1 million dollars worth of grants and incentives for the River House Condominiums.¹⁶

Other recipients for the Downtown Activation Grant have been the Market Street Commons Condominiums Development on the corner of Waterloo and Gordon for 1.5 million dollars, and numbered corporation 2065404 Ontario Inc. of 1.1 million dollar to develop 35,000 square feet of commercial space at 40 Wellington Street.

All in all it seems strange that the people of Guelph are paying for the DGBA considering they work in the interests of a relative few.

The Downtown Guelph Business Association (DGBA) acts as a publicly funded lobby group for large businesses in the downtown. With over 400,000 dollars in public funding and several hundred thousand in private investment, the DGBA boasts a 2013 total budget of over 700,000 dollars.



LEFT "Cops are not the sons of the workers... They are the dogs of the bosses" This sticker was found on York Rd. Photo: Ryan Parkin

RIGHT Illustration by prole.info

"The police have it out for me. They harass me all the time on the street. They have even stopped my mom's car 7 or 8 times in the last few months, and their first comment is always about me." - An employed youth who works and hangs out downtown

THE BRAUN BEHIND THE BRAIN: BY-LAW AND GUELPH POLICE SERVICE

The Guelph Police Service operating budget has increased by 11.9% in 2011 and 2012, and 3.6% increase in 2013. The Guelph Police will also receive 12.6 million dollars earmarked for renovations in their capital budget. In their operating budget alone, the Guelph Police Service receives 34,599,900 dollars or roughly 19% of the total City of Guelph budget. That percentage increases if you include their capital costs for new equipment and vehicles. When juxtaposed with the 2012 public health budget of 3,017,277 dollars, which accounted for roughly 2% of the Municipal budget, the question remains: do people in Guelph think that the Guelph Police should receive funding 11.5 times the size of the funds allocated to

public health, and many times greater than the subsidized housing budget?

There are some police who act like bullies, especially to lower income populations. It is hard to miss the routine harassing, questioning, and handing out of misdemeanour offences to low-income and homeless people who hang out in the downtown. Tensions over policing in the Willow, Brant Ave and Ward neighbourhoods have not been going unnoticed at community meetings and in the sentiments of neighbourhood residents.

The City has also announced its widely unpopular nuisance by-law which will put more power to harass in the hands of city police and municipal by-law enforcement to penalize and criminalize poor and political populations. A meeting sponsored by the City of Guelph about the bylaw on November 13th 2012, revealed

a unanimously dissident crowd. A youth in the crowd spoke articulately against the proposed Nuisance By-law. He said "I have over 5,000 dollars in tickets, and I will never pay them. You're making these laws to throw people like me in prison." In the course of the evening it became apparent that the new laws were aimed at the poor and the political, and like this young man, those who happen to be both.

Police and by-law officers serve a function beyond maintaining law and order, and that is to maintain business-as-usual social relations in Guelph. The inception of the Downtown Police Liaison Officer program and the Public Nuisance by-law reveals that they are used in political ways, to protect the interests of those who have the power to develop Guelph in their own interests. It is important to question how the public territories of the



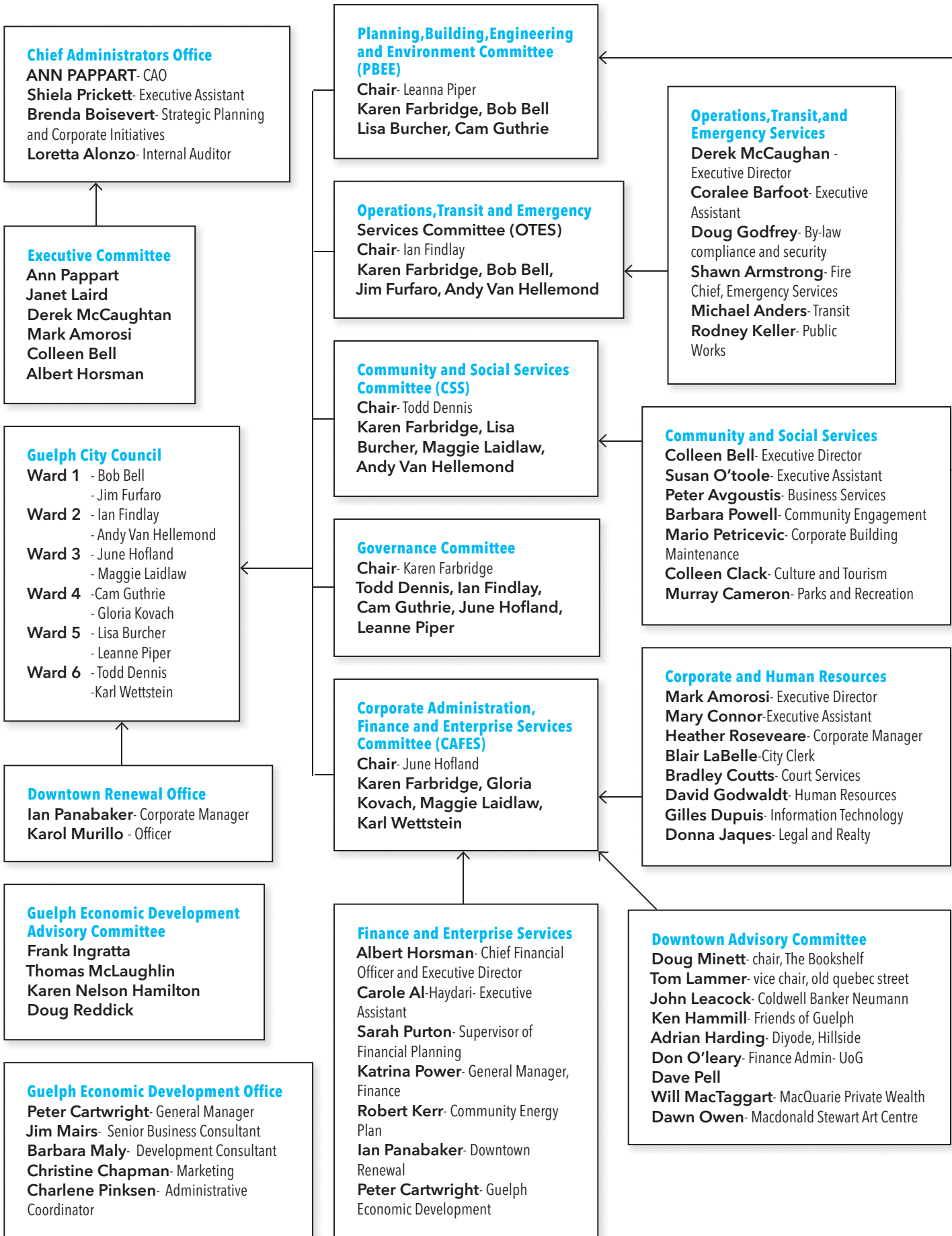
Police and
by-law
officers serve
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beyond
maintaining
law and order,
and that is
to maintain
business-as-
usual social
relations in
Guelph.

city are policed, how they ended up with so much money and power and who these laws and heavily resourced officers protect.

GOTTA KICK AT THE DARKNESS....TILL IT BLEEDS DAYLIGHT

In the end, it is we who are at stake. We are both the chips and the cards, and we can be the hands that deal them if we organize ourselves. We have the possibility to wield collective power, which is stronger than the economic and bureaucratic powers currently lorded over us. If you daydream about what a city built with your own interests in mind would look like, you can reveal that we share many desires in common. We all want clean rivers and affordable rents and mortgages. We want places to experience the wild, and we desire protected habitats, affordable recreational activities and entertainment. Many of us want to reshape Guelph to accommodate sustainable local food and energy sources,

with free-spaces for people to participate in public events, debate, arts, and music. We want a city filled with street art and interactive public spaces that engage us in more critical ways than the sterility of advertisements. We want safe and secure neighbourhoods where we feel close to our neighbours, where everyone has access to food, clothes, warmth and shelter. We want to stop experiencing constant anxiety over income and various costs of living. These shared desires remind us of our shared responsibility to co-build, protect and collectively maintain the City we collaboratively create. I believe in this other city, and a part of my faith in my neighbours makes me think that you do too. We can change this city into a Guelph for us. ▲



Planning, Building, Engineering and Environment Services Managers

Janet Laird- Executive Director
Linda Ramsey- Executive Assistant
Bruce Poole- Chief Building Official
Richard Henry- Engineering Dep.
Todd Salter- Planning Dep.
Dean Wyman- Solid Waste Dep.
Kiran Suresh- Wastewater Dep.
Peter Busetto- Water Dep.
Jim Stokes- Realty Services
Don Kudo- Infrastructure, Design and Construction
Marion Plaunt- Policy Planning and Urban Design

Sylvia Kirkwood- Development Policy
Dave Belander- Water Supply
Robert Kerr- Community Energy Plan
Rajan Philips- Transportation, Development and Engineering
Scott Hannah- Parks Development
Stephen Robinson- Senior Heritage Planner
Paul Ross- Heritage Guelph
Katie Nasswetter- Senior Development Planner
Al Hearne- Senior Planner

Stacey Laughlin- Senior Urban Designer
David de Groot- Urban Designer
Rory Tembleton- Landscape Planner
Rita Kostyam- Development Planner
Brad Hamilton- Engineering
Suzanne Young- Environmental Planner
April Nix- Environmental Planner
Patrick Sheenhy- Senior zoning and by law inspector
Joan Jylanne- Guelph Innovation District policy planner

Guelph Police Services Board

Judy Sorbara- Chair
Len Griffiths- Vice Chair
Carol Parton- Executive Assistant
Karen Farbridge- mayor
Leanna Piper- councillor
Patricia Giles
Bryan Larkin- Chief of Police
Jeffrey de Ruyter- Deputy Chief

Nancy Nodwell- Executive Assistant
Shelagh Morris- Director, Corporate Services
Kirsten Hand- Finance Minister
Tracy Harris- Human Resources
Judith C. Sidlowsky- Legal Council
James Lane- Legal Assistant

Guelph Wellington Business Enterprise Centre Staff

Judi Riddols- Executive Director
Harold Devries
Monica Schut
Carol Racine
Jeanette Johnson

Guelph Wellington Business Enterprise Centre Board of Directors

Jim Mairs
Murray Short
Lise Curran
Tom Manes
Lloyd Longfield
Jim Mahone
Dennis Lever
Carinta Mannarelli
Diane Squires
Cam Guthrie
Lynne Bard
non voting:
Judi Riddols
Philipp Wood

Downtown Guelph Business Association Staff 2012:

Marty Williams- Executive Director
Meg Pembleton- Office and promotions
Sam Jewell- Events coordinator
Staff 2007:
Audrey Jamal, Jennifer Mackie
Lynn Broughton Sherry Petty

Guelph Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Dawn Borho- RBC
Gord Bossey- Holiday Inn
Mark Brombal- Sidinio's
John Burns- ABS Friction
Peter Cartwright
Greg Elliot- The Cooperators
David Estill- Estill Energy
Carly O'Brian- The Achievement Centre
Ken Smith- Business Department U o G
Graham Smyth- Scotiabank

Guelph Chamber of Commerce Executive Directors

Janet Roy- Premium HR Solutions
Dan Lawson- Blount Canada
Rob McLean- Sociable Communications
Amy Kendall- Conestoga College
Murray Short- RLB accountants

Downtown Guelph Business Association Board of Directors 2012:

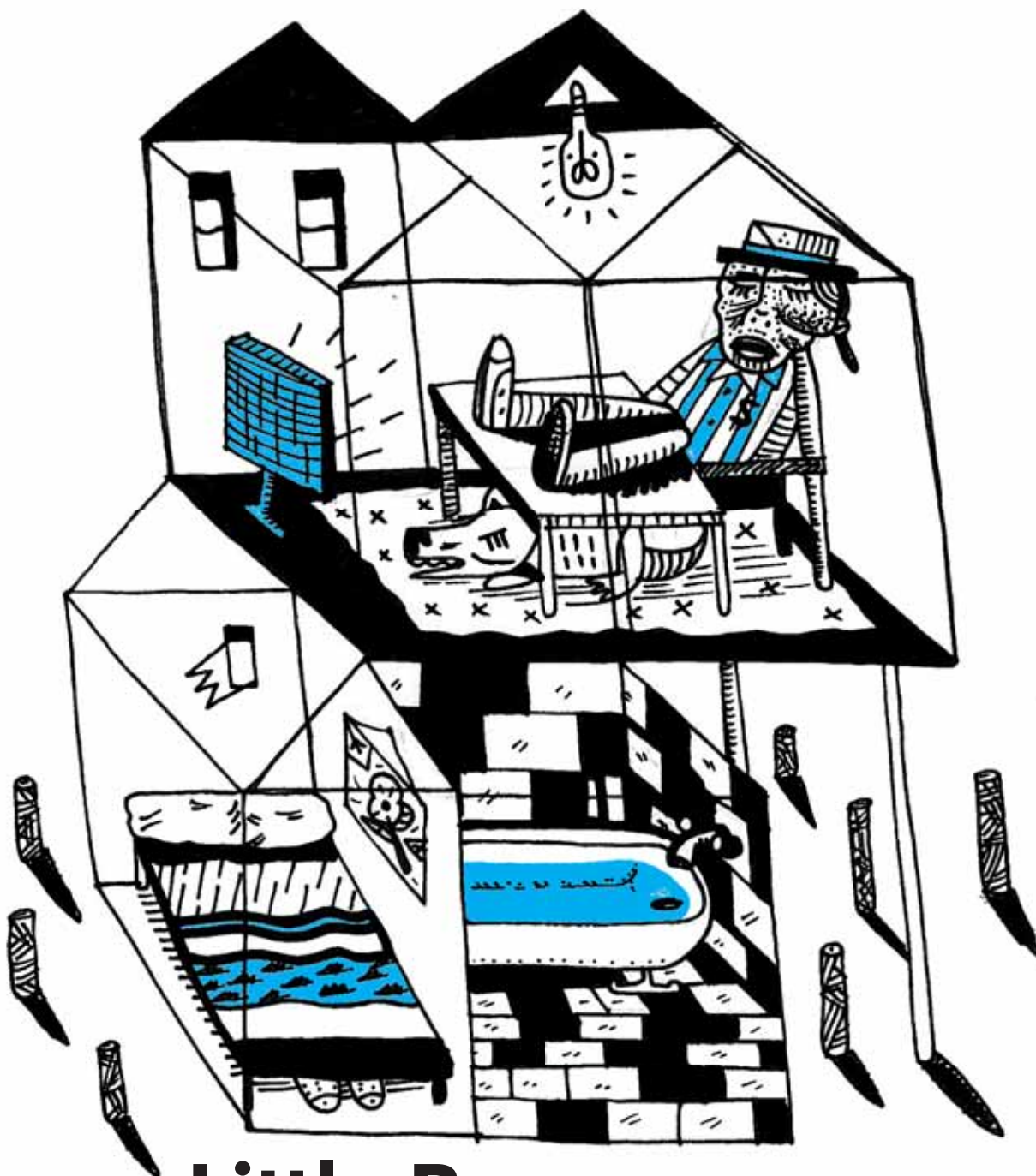
Charles Davidson- Chair
Chris Ahlers- vice chair
Doug Minett- Treasurer
Mark Rodford
Jim Furfaro- councillor
Todd Dennis- councillor
Tony di Battista
Lorenz Calcagno
Tom Lammer
Barbara Turley- McIntyre
non voting:
Marc Brombal
Chuck Cunningham
Ian Panabaker

Formerly (2006):

Mark Rodford- OX, Cornerstone, Ouderkerk and Taylor.
Barbara Turley- McIntyre- The Cooperators
Shelly Kreiger- Red Brick
Bob Bell- councillor
Lisa Burcher- councillor
Judy Grady- Barking Dog Studios
Sarah Harrison- Coriander
John Allan- The Hock Shop
Doug Minett- The Bookshelf
non voting:
David Grey- G.C.C
Brenda Whiteside- Student Affairs, U o G
David Corks- 2007 Economic Development Office
Valerie Sauer- Wellington County

Guelph Chamber of Commerce Staff

Lloyd Longfield- CAO/President
Wendy Brosseau
Betty Ann Cannon
Daryl Macdonald
Sean McLafferty
Katherine Finora
Ann Stewart
Connie Macneil
Jane Wielhorski
Heather Wright



Little Boxes

Guelph's trend of luxury condo developments is expanding to include the student demographic, at the expense of community and affordability. *By Matthew Pecore, CSA Local Affairs Commissioner*

HAVING LIVED IN GUELPH FOR MY ENTIRE LIFE, I feel relatively attuned to the qualities that make Guelph such a special place. I love how Guelph manages to maintain a “small town atmosphere” despite being a mid-size city. As an example, in our downtown core, we champion small businesses. At our university, we see dedicated students fighting against campus corporatization and the gentrification of the university experience that comes as a result of the costs associated with post-secondary education being more and more inaccessible to those below a certain socio-economic status.

Sadly, there is one area of our daily lives where these kinds of actions seem to go unnoticed: our very homes themselves. Whether it is due to the ease of throwing up block style housing, a result of Guelph’s urban growth strategy, or a combination of these and other factors, Guelph is being increasingly subjected to luxury condominium complexes and their ilk. As members of the Guelph community, this means that students are being subjected to these as well.

Take, for instance, the Ontario Municipal Board hearings that occurred back in September. The issue there was around a proposed luxury student complex building at the site of the current Best Western Hotel at the corner of Gordon Street and Stone Road. The proposal received push back from several groups, including the University, City Council, and the neighbourhood community around the site. Unfortunately, all of these complaints centred on issues like the height and density of the buildings, with little mention of the non-physical issues around affordability and community.

The building is marketed as a luxury building, meaning that it tries to appeal to students with a lot of money. Unless they come from affluent families, students generally are not a part of this ideal class as they struggle to pay tuition fees and other school related expenses. Housing is one of the most basic necessities for life; arguably the most important as it is an all-or-nothing expense – you can cut down on food, clothing, and other amenities, but at the end of the day you need to pay your entire rent. One could argue that the idea of luxury housing is


fundamentally biased against students who cannot afford it.

Buildings like these discourage people from getting to know their neighbours and building a community amongst each other. In other buildings owned by the company, there is a game room with amenities that can be booked out, but there are no common areas where tenants can simply hang out and get to know each other. University residences combat these challenges by incorporating lounges and other common areas. In addition, residences have support staff like Residence Life Staff and student organizations like Interhall Council, who devote countless hours towards building community in their buildings.

Luxury student residences do not merely decrease the sense of community between students

The idea of luxury housing is fundamentally biased against students who cannot afford it.

but impact the ability for students to learn to be functioning and respectful members of the community. One of the most common complaints heard about students is how disrespectful they are with noise and parties. Students counter with the argument that they are still learning to live on their own and understand the freedom they have but perhaps do not quite know how to handle that yet. Putting students in luxury apartment buildings will only serve to delay this pathway to full maturity even further.

While gentrification at its core is about appealing to higher economic statuses, it often comes with the side effect of creating communities where residents become alienated from each other. To have this happen at the time when students are still learning to be a part of a community does them no favours, despite how it may appear on the surface, and in fact probably works against them. The answer to these problems does not lie in students all living in the same luxury building so as to be “out of the hair” of community residents, a sentiment I have heard many long-term Guelph residents recommend. Instead, it lies in going the other direction and working to make housing, tuition, and other expenses more affordable for students so that they are able to work less, have less stress, thereby being able to spend more time getting to know their neighbours and becoming a part of the community. 

THE PEAK



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

1 the Print Shop was equipped with a 1896 Chandler and Price Letterpress **2** Some of the pamphlets available by donation at The Square; **3** Release party for Matt Soltys' book *Tangled Roots* in July 2012.

BOTTOM RIGHT

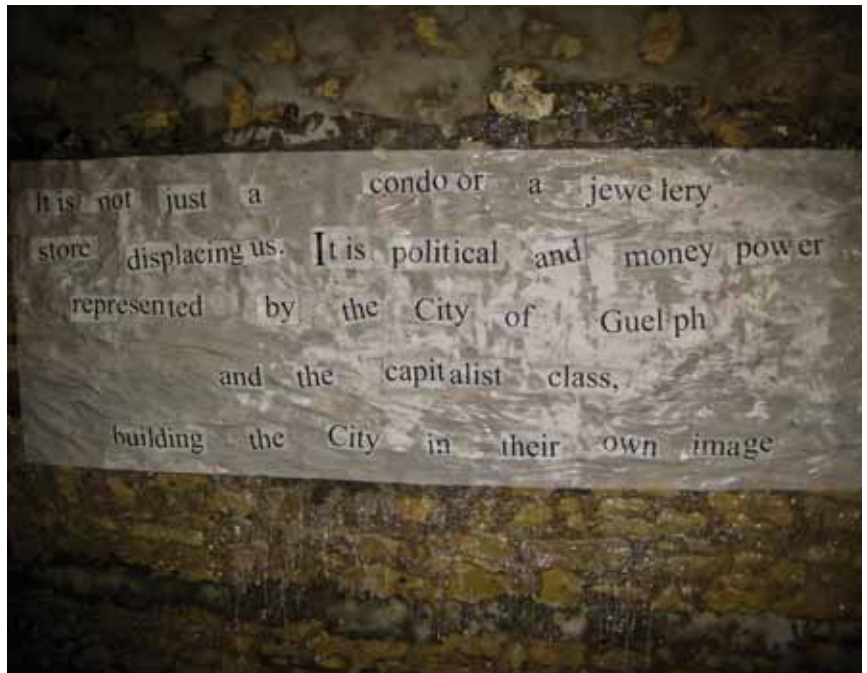
Oversized poster left outside The Square Print Shop & Social Centre on the night of the Eviction, October 31st, 2012

Goodbye from the Square

Guelph's anarchist social centre had an impact beyond the five months it stayed open. On Halloween 2012, friends of The Square marked the closure of the space with celebrations that ranged from family-friendly to confrontational. By The Square Print Shop & Social Centre

INTRODUCTION

ON HALLOWEEN, WE HOSTED SOME lovely music and hangouts to say goodbye to our young social centre. The night started out with some cute winter snap peas and cupcake costumes running around. Richard Laviolette played a beautiful set and took out the cuss words for the young ones in the crowd. Byron belted out songs about love and struggle in Guelph at the top of his lungs with a room full of back up singers. Jenny Omnichord, in an incredible Anne Murray costume, sang some beautiful songs about loss and shared words about how much she loved having The Square around. Test Their Logik finished off the night with a lively hip-hop performance. In between the music, a number of folks shared their good memories of what the space meant to them.



"It is not just a condo or a jewelry store displacing us. It is political and money power represented by the City of Guelph and the capitalist class, building the City in their own image"
-Oversized poster left outside the Social Centre



Perhaps we can see this relationship most clearly in St. George's Square... As the city diverts bus traffic from the square, with beat cops harassing the downtown youth and security cameras installed, we see a space traditionally used as a public, social gathering place becoming a decaying site of human interactions.

EVICITION PARTY

On October 31st, We closed our doors after only five months of running a social centre in a small city. The Square Print Shop & Social Centre was both a space for our hobby letterpress and social/political printing projects, and a large, semi-accessible downtown space for free events with no rental costs and no fees at the door.

A small collective of friends and anarchists paid rent out-of-pocket and spent countless hours promoting, hosting and figuring out the boring stuff (like bills) so that there was a space

for all the people out there who were looking for a place to hang out, host a workshop or a show. It also functioned as a place to go to talk politics, make friends and find other people who share similar ideas.

The space we were able to create facilitated a social hub in the downtown for some queer organizing, discussions about the city's development strategies and gentrification, the struggles of good parenting, and so much more. In our short time, we were able to host over one hundred events, a third of them in September alone.

HALLOWEEN EVICTION PARTY IN THE STREETS

On Halloween Night 2012, The Square held what we called a "good-bye party," but, in the spirit of our former landlords, who chose not to renew our lease and to rent the space to a jewelry store, the night looked and felt more like an eviction party.

After the wholesome, family-friendly music show and dance party inside The Square wrapped up, the final track of Test Their Logic's set led the crowd out into the downtown core, accompanied by a sound system. As Testament and Illogik spit their rhymes, posters and graffiti critiquing the city budget, development and gentrification went up on the banks and bus shelters around St. George's Square.

Our roaming sound system led the dance party into the streets, a joyful crew of thirty plus queers and freaks blocking traffic and turning college bros' heads with our sweet dance moves and all-around fierceness.

The sound system died in the middle of Rhianna's 'We Found Love,' which cued the pigs, who arrived hooting their horns and trying to push people out of the streets with their cruisers. But just



as some riled-up faggots started to smooch on the hood of a cruiser, the chorus burst back in from the sound system, shit got hype again and folks were fierce in the face of the cops, who attempted to shut us down. The arrest of one friend didn't take the steam out of the party, and we led a caravan of cruisers down a city street. Shouts of "suck our faggot cocks" and "fuck the police" were heard as a cruiser was again forced to retreat, and pushed back by the hands of the writhing pile of homoeroticism still, literally, planted on its hood.

Shoutouts to all the queers, anarchists, kids, performers and participants for making the end of our social space feel just like that, some social shit. It felt awesome to leave the space as a roaming (queer) dance party in a city which suppresses our deviant bodies and desires, in the centre of a bar scene that doesn't even have a gay bar to critique, and in the midst of our social centre being closed because our vision of the world doesn't fit the safe, clean, polite mold of the City of Guelph.

In conclusion, we did it for the lulz and we will keep hauling ass for revolt.

-some insurgent queers, rad organizers and fierce babes.

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The Square was a beautiful project that stood in contrast to the City's aspirations to just "put a condo on it" or "put a cupcake shop on it" (Portlandia reference anyone?). The Social Centre made space for free events which was a starting point for relationships to grow outside of commercial and business interactions, in contrast to the City's agenda.

Perhaps we can see this relationship most clearly in St. George's Square, which our social Centre was named after. As the city diverts bus traffic from the square, with beat cops harassing the downtown youth and security cameras installed, we see a space traditionally used as a public, social gathering place becoming a decaying

site of alienated human interactions. In our Social Centre, we tried to foster a conviviality similar to that of the city square of years past. As long as our interests stand in contrast with capitalists,¹ The Square and the intentions we put into that space will come into conflict with city's business interests.

Thank you everyone who contributed to the space, donated their time, money and energy to host workshops, perform, screen movies, engage in discussions and for bringing new relationships into our lives based on a world we wish to create. [△](#)

[↑ Capitalism mimics these real human interactions in order to make a profit.](#)

ABOVE Some of the many amazing costumes and participants during the Masquerade Eviction Party at The Square.
Photo: Bryan Hill & others

Until we find a new space, see you in the streets!

-The Square Print Shop & Social Centre

Recent Indigenous Uprisings In "Canada"

Idle No More has taken off in a major way across the country. Several hundred actions initiated by Indigenous peoples have inspired many, including anarchists, to take action in solidarity.

DECEMBER 30TH, 2012

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory - Blockade of rail traffic between Toronto and Montreal erected for several hours.

JANUARY 6TH, 2013

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory - Blockade of rail traffic between Toronto and Montreal erected. Lasts several hours.

JANUARY 10TH, 2013

Kingston, ON - John A. MacDonald statue vandalized with red paint, and spray painted messages written across it: "This is stolen land," "murderer" and "colonizer."

JANUARY 14TH, 2013

Coastal Salish Territory (Vancouver, BC) - 1000 march against Enbridge hearings, a black bloc marched within the demo and they tried to block the entrance to the hearings.

JANUARY 16TH, 2013 (IDLE NO MORE NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION)

Windsor, ON - Protesters block traffic for several hours on the Ambassador Bridge, which is North America's busiest border crossing.

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory - Rail traffic between Toronto and Montreal blockaded for five hours, disrupting ten trains.

Gitwangak Territory (Terrace, BC) - CN Rail blockaded for the majority of the day.

Lekwungen and WSANEC Territories (Vancouver Island, BC) - Protesters, many from Tsawout and Tsartlip First Nations, block traffic on the Pat Bay Highway, which connects the Victoria airport with the Swartz Bay ferry terminal.

NAPANEE, ONTARIO: WASTE MANAGEMENT INC. ATTACKED

Last night [January 5th, 2013], we damaged the windows and signage at the Waste Management Corporation's "community outreach" storefront in Napanee, using glass etching solution and paint bombs.

Waste Management operated the Richmond Landfill north of Napanee, leaking through the bedrock and poisoning the Bay of Quinte watershed. Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory is downstream from the dump and has been under a boiled water advisory for years. Now, despite widespread opposition, Waste Management is pushing hard to construct a new landfill, the "Beechwood Road Environmental Centre," more than four times the size of the Richmond Landfill.

We took this small action as non-native anarchists inspired by the struggle for land and freedom by the Tyendinaga Mohawks specifically, and grassroots aspects of the Idle No More movement generally. Towards an increasingly militant and uncompromising struggle against colonization, capitalism and the Canadian state,
-Some anarchists

SOUTHERN ONTARIO: SOLIDARITY CN RAIL SIGNAL SABOTAGE

On Thursday January 3rd [2012], following the removal of the Aamjiwnaang blockade near Sarnia, Ontario we used copper wire to block train traffic in both directions on the CN mainline through the suburbs north of Toronto. Read below for directions on how to reproduce this action yourself.

We were inspired to act by the numer[ous] blockades of freight traffic, roads, highways and border crossings across so-called Canada [sic.] by indigenous warriors and rebels, which has been one of the greatest demonstrations of unity in a decade. These actions have been undertaken by so many different communities and nations inspiring a new generation to join in struggles for land and autonomy.

The Assembly of First Nations chiefs, Theresa Spence and government hacks have all tried to put the reins on these actions of dispersed sabotage and economic disruption but we are inspired by the fact that these actions continue to spread and grow, demonstrating these apparent leaders' lack of control.

These actions are easy and reproducible. Railways cross most cities and reserves and move money for the rich.

Solidarity with the rebels disrupting capital.

-Some Anarchists

Choose a section of railway tracks with a degree of privacy. Using no less than 12 feet of large gauge copper wire (plastic casing removed), wrap each end of the wire around the two rail[s] and back onto themselves, ensuring as much contact with the rail[s] as possible. As soon as both ends are securely in place, the circuit will be complete and the railway traffic signals in the area will signal that there is a barrier on the tracks. Leave promptly.



ABOVE Aamjiwnaang blockade set up across CN railway through their territory near Sarnia, Ontario. The Aamjiwnaang nation is almost completely surrounded by chemical plants and refineries processing Tar Sands oil.

Photo by poormansmedia

Six Nations Territory (Caledonia, ON)
Road blockade of Highway 6 set up, halting traffic for several hours.

Papashase Territory (AB) - Queen Elizabeth II Highway, which provides the main commuter thoroughfare between Edmonton and Calgary, blockaded during rush hour.

Calgary, AB - Downtown traffic disrupted by roaming protest.

Roseau River Territory (Portage la Prairie, MN) - CN Rail line blockaded by twenty people for most of the day. The blockade was removed after an injunction was served.

Shoal Lake Territory - three hour blockade of Trans-Canada highway near the Ontario-Manitoba border.

New Castle, NB - Miramichi bridge blocked for three hours as protesters marched through the city.

JANUARY 17TH, 2013

Six Nations Territory (Haldimand, ON)
Six separate construction sites where wind turbines were being installed were shut down by about 30 native protesters.

TOMMORROW

Whatever you bring. Join the fight. 

Southern Ontario NYE Prison Demos




Raucous demos and fireworks displays outside of prisons are a longstanding anarchist New Year's Eve tradition. In 2012, local hooligans went on the road to show their love to some of the almost 15,000 people locked up in Ontario jails. By Southern Ontario Anarchist Road Warriors. Reprinted from anarchistnews.org

FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, ANARCHISTS and our friends in Southern Ontario went on a New Year's Eve anti-prison road trip. Starting off at Grand Valley Institution for Women (GVI) in Kitchener, about sixty of us set off fireworks and called out greetings to the women inside, many of whom happened to be out on the yard or were able to open their windows and send some noise back our way. Despite what screws at this prison have said at noise demos past, it very much seemed like the women appreciated the visit, with those outside dancing to beats that were being pumped out by our portable sound system and drum squad, and those inside screaming out kind wishes and whoops. GVI is the same prison where guards were recently found to be exchanging drugs for sex with inmates, and where Ashley Smith died.

We then hit the road and arrived in Hamilton for the fifth annual noise

demonstration outside Barton Jail. About thirty of us set off the remainder of our fireworks stash, spray painted walls with slogans against prisons, and threw snowballs and paint-bombs at the prison and prisoner transport vehicles. As has become commonplace at demonstrations outside Barton, the sounds of prisoners banging on their windows reverberated through the neighbourhood, filling participants with both joy that we could provide a break in the daily misery of prison and rage that those windows and walls exist in the first place.

After embarrassing a sad cadre of police officers who "just wanted to talk" after the demonstration had ended, we returned to the warmth of our homes and each other, dancing until sunrise.

-Southern Ontario Anarchist Road Warriors 

NAPANEE NYE NOISE DEMO

from anarchistnews.org

On a cold and snowy NYE in Napanee, ON, about a dozen anarchists and friends gathered for a noise demo outside of Quinte Detention Centre under the cover of darkness. We ran through the snow and filled the air with anti-prison chants, wolf howls, and the joyous bang of fireworks to express our love and solidarity with those incarcerated at Quinte and rage at the existence of this prison and all prisons everywhere. We saw people through the windows, and we hope they saw and heard our fireworks and shouts. We fled into the night and escaped with not a cop in sight.

Fuck cops//fuck prisons//happy NYE!

Toronto Action in Solidarity With Villa Amalias and LK37

The Toronto Solidarity cell demonstrates solidarity with Greek anarchists with a coordinated attack against a condo development. Reprinted from anarchistnews.org.

IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING [SATURDAY, January 19th, 2013] we struck another small blow against the mechanisms of capital. The street level of one of the many new condo developments under construction in the city, containing building supplies as well as the architectural plans for the building, was smashed and then set ablaze as a small gesture of our rage. Our anger is directed both towards the continuing, and celebrated, gentrification within the city, and the ongoing imprisonment of anarchist comrades around the world.

Gentrification is the celebrated death of community in slow motion. The encroachment of high priced individualized living spaces into a community; forcing out people to whom boutique living is unaffordable, splitting up life long friendships and personal relations. With this come the chain store vultures picking apart the carcasses of local, independent stores as well as the inevitable “cleansing” of the area, removing any unwanted signs of life or suffering. The aspirational advertisements which accompany these developments hide the secret that instead of a lifestyle change or upgrade, what is being sold is an isolative and vacuous box with the trappings and veneer of luxury, as well as one’s very own role in the destruction of a pre-existing community.

With one change of our clothes we disappeared into the night undetected. This is not an attempt at a gloat or a glorification, but an attempt to show how easily these acts can be replicated elsewhere. Let’s make their lives as difficult as they try to make ours. This is an escalation in regards to our tactics, but we realize these acts are still of small

scale in relation to actions of comrades across the world. With this, we also recognize the need to intensify our attacks against the state and capital in North America in relation to the intensity of repression and attacks against the anarchist and anti-authoritarian community. With every wave of repression must follow a targeted, critiqued, and increasingly militaristic¹ response.

This is an act of solidarity with the people of the Villa Amalias² and Lelas Karagianni 37³ squats in Athens who have had their homes raided by the brutal, fascist Greek police. We chose to target new housing developments, catering to the bourgeois of the city, as they lie in direct contrast to the vibrance, community and solidarity seen in squats across the world. Another stark difference is the economically exclusionary nature of private property. We are not fighting for “affordable housing” or “income-based housing”, we are fighting for housing for every human being, regardless of economic status.

We also send an embrace warmed with love and rage to Panagiotis Argirou.⁴ Strength, comrade, so you may continue this fight.

For the negation of every oppression this society is complicit in. Until the last prison walls crumble,

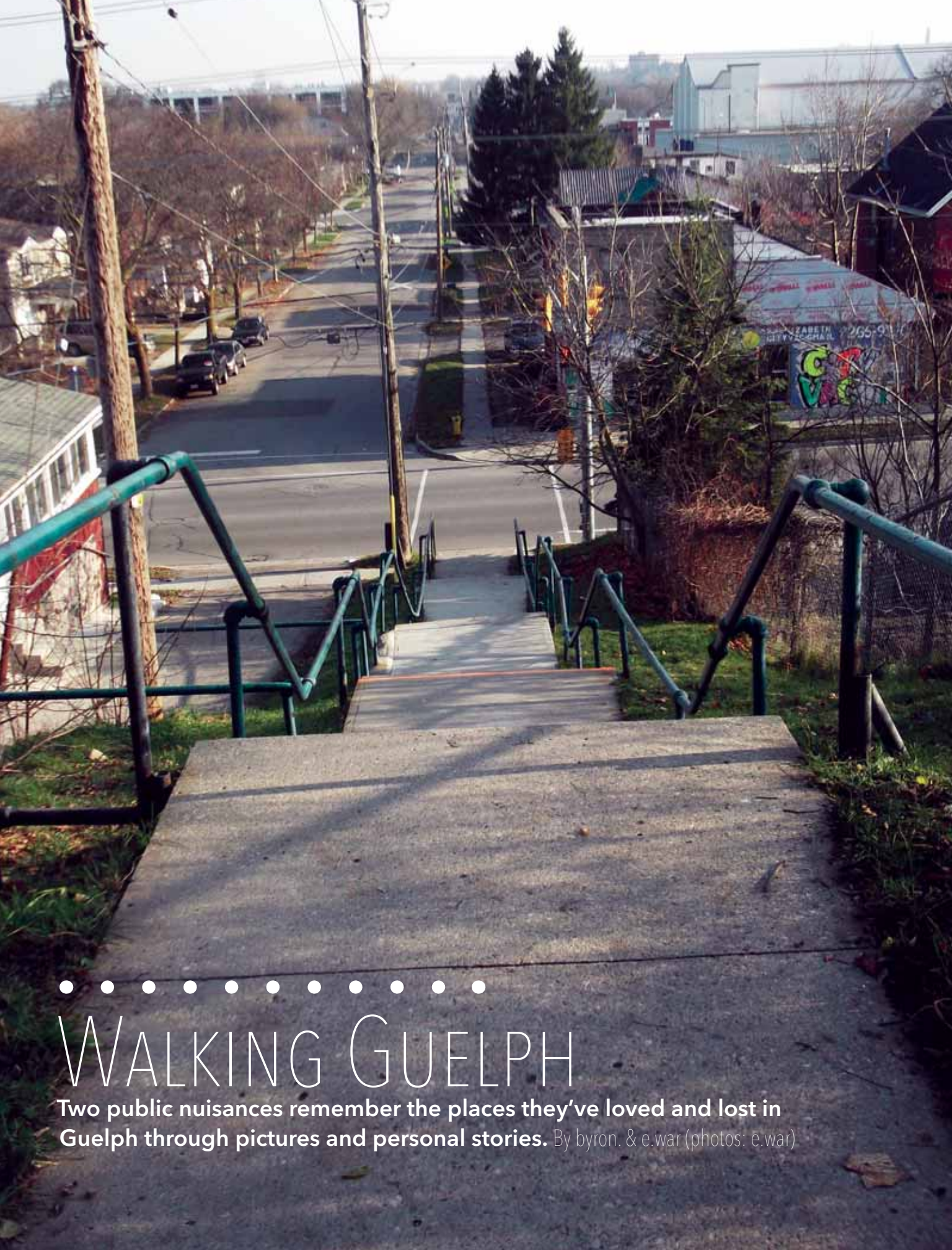
-The Toronto Solidarity Cell 

¹ For an animated discussion of the term “militarism” and its place within anarchist struggle, check out the comments below its original post on Anarchist News: <http://tinyurl.com/a8mut8w>

² For more information about this squat and its eviction, check out <http://tinyurl.com/as4ojj3>

³ Lelas Karagianni 37 is Athens’ oldest anarchist squat. Updates about its eviction can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/axpor4p>

⁴ Panagiotis Argirou is an anarchist prisoner accused of being a member of an underground organization responsible for a number of bombings, arsons and letter bombs called the Conspiracy of Cells of Fires.



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WALKING GUELPH

Two public nuisances remember the places they've loved and lost in Guelph through pictures and personal stories. By byron. & e.war (photos: e.war)



← 100 STEPS

e.war:

If I hadn't hung out with someone who was from Guelph, I don't think I would have ever found these steps. They are a great way to get from the Ward over to the Eramosa shopping plazas. They are also a great place to stop and spend time. I was introduced to a game of dice called High Low on this bridge one whisky-Ofueled evening after playing a few rounds of tennis at the courts at the very top of the steps. It is a partially wooded walk which can be private and quiet. This is another spot in Guelph that lends itself to public works of art and, in this particular place, very small ones.

byron.:

Maybe there are actually 118, but nobody ever bothers to count them. Everyone's distracted by the graffiti cut into the wrought iron piping which make the climb up to the bluffs above Elizabeth, over the tracks and onto Grove St. These are legends of geography in the Ward; word spread since before I moved here. Parties below the bridge and the tracks which go on to Toronto to the East and Kitchener to the West, now occupied by the GO Train-- the blessing, the curse! And the stairs themselves, patrolled by yuppies with ipods, running shoes, and heart rate calculators built into their running shoes and ipods. The steps to somewhere else, out and up, from the floodplains of the Ward to bougie Grange St., and St. George's neighbours alighting on the crest.

GRAFFITI WALL →

e.war:

This wall is now coated in some kind of anti-graffiti stuff that makes it easier to buff and facilitate the removal of graffiti. Graffiti at this spot was always colourful and changing. Doodles, drawings, comments, conversions, confessions and drunken scrawling-- it was all here and it was all good. This is a quiet spot that lends itself to the private time you need to write in indelible ink in public. The stuff that gets written here now is quickly buffed and at the time that we visited it, we only found a few small stencils that could only be seen by someone walking by and not from a city truck.

byron.:

Thousands of years ago, folks decided to tell stories of epic hunts and local fauna by painting on the walls of caverns cut deep into the earth, visualizing emptiness on the walls and impressing their myth and memory with flesh and paint and ash. These walls remind me of those empty caves... a space where folks have left signs and omens to those who look long enough to read them. For a while now, the church, or the city, has been making diligent efforts to keep these walls gravely pristine. If you are into brutalist minimalism that might work, but colour has enhanced its face before. If you look long at its cracks and crevices, you might see some original work peeling out through the chipping overcoats.



GARDEN ON NORTHHUMBERLAND OPPOSITE GRAFFITI WALL

byron.:



There used to be mulberries here. A bush along the back fence would provide buckets of red and black mulberries, and along the flatter ridge at the top of the grass there used to be a guerilla garden sown with oregano, sage and chives. There were tomatoes and nasturtiums as well.

One day while on a visit to the garden, I came upon a cleaned out fenceline with my favorite mulberries cut away to make room... for what?

My guess is public safety. It is thought that if you cut down low shrubs, bushes and dense foliage, the police will have cleaner lines of sight and people won't be able to hide their sleeping bags, tools, alcohol, or tents.

The day after they cut all the mulberry bushes down there was a front page piece in the *Guelph Mercury* about the need for food sustainability within the city! Guelph's foresight amazes me.



BUS TERMINAL DOWNTOWN



byron.:

Taking transit from the core and placing it on the edge discourages engagement, encourages civic alienation and ushers passengers towards other destinations away from the well-to-do and classy image that the Downtown Guelph Business Association seeks to encourage. The bus terminal itself is littered with cameras pointing in every possible direction and creates one of the most surveilled areas within the city limits. These cameras are in place for your concern and protection... of course.



OLD PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS



byron.:

Locks, borders, and fences. Denying access, limiting use. Exclusion and alienation. Markers of the new downtown experience. Downtown remixed. From a more common space of benches, walkways and even stores accessible to various incomes, to a new vision of high end boutiques, overpriced coffee, cupcakes and concrete. Jewellery stores, banks, clothiers for men, ladies, dogs and children.

More beat cops killing yer buzz, more security protecting more private interests, and private benches and private property, so something will still remain private despite all the new surveillance systems in place downtown.



PATH BESIDE WELLINGTON COUNTY EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

byron.:

"NO TRESPASSING : THIS AREA
IS FOR THE USE OF COUNTY OF
WELLINGTON EMPLOYEES ONLY".

Interesting place for a private park
downtown, however small. With the city
removing most benches in the city's core
and only leaving those exposed to cam-
eras and security forces, one oasis remains.
The County of Wellington's private bench
and terrace for the singular enjoyment of
city employees. Just so you know, they've
chained down the bench in case you might
get to thinking of taking it for your own uses.

FENCED WALKWAY NEAR BELL



e.war:

This path is only wide enough
for two to pass, forcing folks to walk
single-file through it and experience it
alone. This path is a quick way to get
from Cork Street to Quebec Street and
a place I like to stop and read the on
going conversations. New things are
written, painted, stencilled, glued to
the white brick surfaces almost on a
daily basis. Some is silly, vulgar even
and some reverberate profoundly. I
am surprised how long some stuff
has been written here, this might be a
case of can't be seen from a city truck
and can only be experienced by the
pedestrian.





PATH NEAR CAR WASH



e.war:

This little path is a way to get downtown instead of going through the mall. It might get more use now that the bus terminal is situated close by. It is a slick and deadly path in winter weather, and maybe that is why there are three or four different footpaths on this little hill. The metal barriers have always been there and demand a leg up unless you have four legs and then it is just a little hop hop. The hill is steep and sometimes needs a run up.

UNDER RAIL BRIDGE

e.war:

The river crashes down from the dam and rushes by below the ledge that you can comfortably perch two or three on. Above you, light streams down from between the rail ties. This is a place that I have tucked away alone and with friends. A public space that you can pretend is a private, and a place that you can flirt without being caught, or sit alone without disturbances. This is a place where you can be invisible, disappear.



HEFFERNAN FOOTBRIDGE



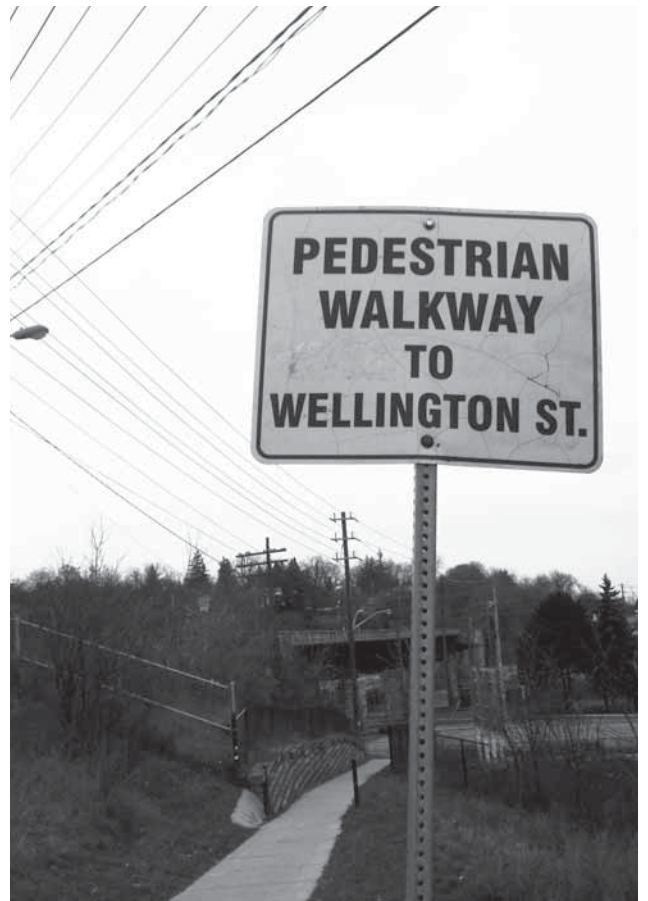
e.war:

A few years ago when I would visit Guelph almost every other weekend this bridge would lead the way to my home away from home just a few doors down from the bridge on the Arthur side. Walking across that bridge began to mean the end of a trip and the feelings that being with the people most important to you bring. It was the access we used to get to downtown and those important places we used to visit. It was also a place that you could stop and talk and no one would hear the secrets you had to say. It was also a spot where you could stop and say nothing.

WALK WAY TO WELLINGTON →

e.war:

This is the path I had to use when the pedestrian tunnel under the tracks was blocked and the path over the tracks was fenced and blocked off. It's the long way around. It was originally put in to gain access to the dirt parking lots behind the tracks and I think is rarely used by the everyday pedestrian. I believe this is a great example of urban planning happening without thought being given to the folks who use the actual space.



← THE WALKWAY DOWNTOWN

e.war:

This is a pedestrian-only covered path between the new post office and the Bank of Montreal. An interesting use of space. The roof is made of clearish corrugated plastic so when it rains the path is dry and has an echo to it like a tin roof. I like this shortcut and use it to get the library from downtown. △

how capital profits from crisis

chords: G, C, G, D. capo: 3rd fret

for every new crisis there's a dollar to be made
for the big corporations and the enabling state
making lots of money on the misery of the poor
its the same routine played out for foreign wars

send in the merc's, and the army and the pigs
make sure no one's looting, trying to fill the fridge
keep 'em pacified so all they can do is cry
as they all get brushed aside.

once they're contained, send the contractors in
tearing down the homes that folks used to live in
build up a condo they could never afford
give 'em all jobs just washing the floor.

accomplice yuppie class comes and takes over town
build the city up while they get settled down
contractors get paid and the police too
the government foots the bill which comes back to you.

if you keep paying taxes you enable this shit
while its the poor and dispossessed who often get the worst hit
they deal with the fall out, the floods and the wars
yeah they dont forget the wounds, yeah they bear the scars.

i'd like to think that one day when they try to put us down
we'll steal their guns and burn it all to the ground
we'll take back the block and we'll all get free
fuck the state, fuck the dollar, and fuck the misery. △

i wrote this song in reaction to seeing the cycles of development that occur in post-crisis situations: hurricane Katrina, the Iraq war, colonial/imperial pushes, and of course, gentrification.

in Guelph, i think the crisis of too many people in a limited space like Toronto has pushed the state to enact laws which spread the growth to neighbouring cities and towns, forcing them to expand and develop. Guelph is hit by this growth and therefore must expand. i'm not good at the legal/political details of this process, but i can recognize it in the

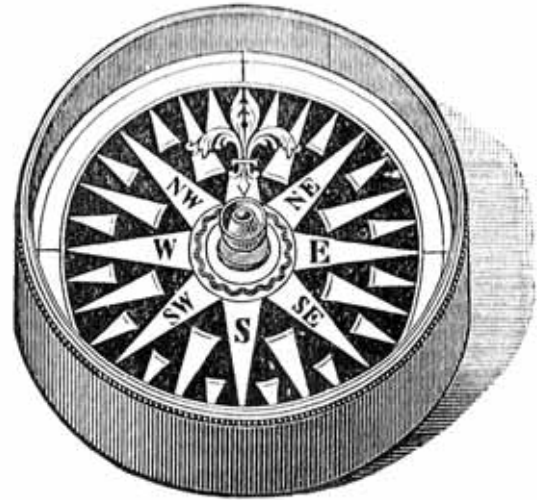
changing population in this city.

i came to Guelph from Toronto in 2006. i identify with an artist/political kid hipster class who, without many resources, can move somewhere less expensive with less big city issues in hopes of finding space to create a meaningful life which requires less resistance. i identify as part of the problem, and also, weirdly enough, as part of a solution. i think artists, community-minded folks, anti-capitalists, and anti-statists can be a part of challenging gentrification and the forces which enable it. how? i'm not quite sure. no matter what has

been happening in Guelph there are still all sorts of condos going up. the songs i sing, the spaces i work in, and the folks whom i get together and organize things with haven't seemed to stop the process any. instead it might have just commodified itself, packaged up frustration and turned it into a neat boutique of resistance: come to Guelph! where the citizens are so cute and engaged!

anyhow, this song is just a reflection of this tendency with a little bit of hope at the end that things might change. hopefully, maybe? doubt it.

—byron.



Mass Dérive

Stemming from ideas and practices developed by the French Situationists, *dérives* challenge the ways we relate to, move through, and interact in urban spaces. Here some ideas and activities to try on your next late-night wander through your neighborhood. By Anonymous

THIS text was handed out in zine form at the Montreal Anarchist Bookfair a few years back.

WHAT IS DÉRIVE?

DÉRIVES ARE PLAYFUL DRIFTS THROUGH city landscapes and dances amidst trudging concrete monsters. The Situationists involved themselves in *dérives* as an exploration of psychogeography as departure from urban constructs, which quickly turn potential for direct experiences into representative states. The city lives, but only in a dead form. Our surroundings often cry out for intimacy and connection. Brightened by joyous wandering, the following of our desires and spontaneous game creation, we see the urban situation for what it is and what it might become.

WHY MASS DÉRIVE?

Many of us have explored the city on our own, thinking to ourselves, pondering love and loss, dreaming of tomorrow and days gone by. In these moments we appear alone, and into our ears it is whispered, “where are the wanderers?” It would seem that collective fantasy no longer allows time for such carefree moments, moments of living. We are oh-so-rushed. Concluding that there is always tomorrow, that there is little time for today,

we retreat in virtual escape. We at once hold the hands of machines and lovers. Embracing the teddy bear and the automated levers, escalator railings, the sales rack, instant messages and the cold, cold words. We encounter football games, cellular phones, keyboards and tramways, but rarely ever each other. So many choices thrust upon us, the invariable quickness, the distance and countless divergences; it is all so blindingly disjointed. We might never find each other even if we wanted to. Drifting amidst looming towers allows us to experience something wholly other, something unspoken that is quickly being lost. We feel this need.

Social managers have created urbanism that directs us in very precise and linear paths. Tracked over a period of time, our movements often take the form of simplistic geometric shapes whereas our masters are developing an urbanism of tactical inverse geometry. This tactical urbanism will intensify as expansive wars create temporary militarized zones, permanent surveillance and check point swarmings. We feel it is important for individuals to understand the changing

psychogeography of cities, but also to create play amidst the grey graveyards and muraled ghettos. *Dérives* allow small groups to share their feelings on urbanism and confront alienating environments at their source, denying them through play. A mass *dérive* provides the opportunity to collide with other drifters, to share games with individuals holding urban experiences, and to shuffle group dynamics. We feel great potential in a multitude of individuals sharing this experience throughout the bookfair.

HOW TO DRIFT?

Wander with friends. Do what you feel comfortable with and try to apply your knowledge of gameplay to the city. Go with individuals who have similar understanding of psychogeography, and those who can suggest new games. Follow strangers who take us from the ordinary and allow us to discover the unnameable. Play with strengths and weaknesses. Consider your judgements and the desires flowing through you, begging to follow certain paths. Fear what is behind you, and then run towards it.



A FEW GUIDELINES TO GET YOU STARTED

We suggest a balance between drifting, spontaneous/ instinctive pulls, and randomized gameplay. The rules here correspond to a deck of cards. Choose a card, or come up with new games of your own creation.

- ➔ **2** - Take your second left, second right and then first left. Follow this pattern until you come to a dead end or get bored.
- ➔ **3** - Follow the first person you see with a toddler. Stay with them until they notice you or a couple with a toddler walk by.
- ➔ **4** - Sit on the sidewalk, obstructing pedestrians, and play cards or chess. Make up any games you like: hopscotch, marbles, tag. Interact with the people walking by, say “I’m going on a camping trip and I’m going to bring.... what are you going to bring?”
- ➔ **5** - Every time you come to running water genuflect on your hands and knees for at least five minutes.
- ➔ **6** - Take your first left. Walk straight until you find 6 or more pigeons. Scare them and go in the direction of the darkest pigeon.
- ➔ **7** - At any dead end streets or alleys you find lay down on the ground and look up at the sky.
- ➔ **8** - Explore any subway, train station or bus stop you may come across. Take note of any graffiti. Take photos and draw pictures and diagrams. At the third subway station ask someone for directions to a place of their choosing. Act like a tourist and see where they suggest you go. Follow their directions.
- ➔ **9** - With a partner, spend half an hour talking shit about everyone you see, (say only negative things). Be accurate and any slip up means starting over. Repeat this, but saying only positive things about the people you see. Make sure there’s some evidence for what you say.



BELOW Hydro electric tower in the north end of Guelph at Night.
Photo: Bryan Hill

- **10** - Follow the first person you see wearing red. Do so until they notice you or you can't go any further.
- **Jack** - Chase bike messengers whenever you can for the next 40 minutes. In the meantime you can red light / green light.
- **Queen** - Explore buildings you find play the exquisite corpse, the surrealist game whereby you take a piece of paper, one person writes in indefinite/ definite article and an adjective, the next person folds the paper and writes the verb, the paper is folded again and another (in) definite article/ adjective combination is written. Combine the sentence and give it to the first person you see.
- **King** - Approach the most upright looking people and ask them directions to somewhere either real or made up, and if they give you directions go in the opposite direction. If they don't give you directions react with exaggeration: whine and complain and get the best directions possible.
- **Ace** - Have your partners each suggest a theme, then draw a picture (based upon these themes) of someone who is sitting down or appears to be waiting for something. Give them the picture.
- **Joker** - Agree on a location with your partners, and, going in different directions, race there. Δ



A Critique of Hillside

The Hillside Festival presents an image of community, appreciation of the environment, and local food and music, but does this image stand up to scrutiny? By Amber Holland

OFTEN I FIND MYSELF AT CULTURAL EVENTS IN Guelph, in particular the Fab Five (The Hillside festival, The Jazz Festival, Eden Mills Writers Festival, and the Festival of Moving Media). These events give rise to a slew of mixed feelings, from excitement to confusion but predominantly frustration. Hillside, to me, is the hardest of these cultural events to enjoy, as it poses and stands for so many wonderful things (community, nature appreciation, folk music), however it actually inhibits these things rather than facilitating them. So here are a few of the reasons why I find it impossible to enjoy Hillside.

workshops, music and an atmosphere of goodwill are in the air. But why does this feeling of mutual goodwill and community fade so rapidly when we leave the festival and re-enter daily obligations? It is largely because we feel isolated from the tasks that we are doing in daily life, because they mainly are associated with waged social relations, or recovery from those relations (on Friday night we may have a beer to recover from a long day, or watch a movie on Saturday afternoon to shut our brain down, etc.) Hillside exists as a break in capitalism, (not even a true break, as it still costs money to get in and is full of corporate shit) so that every other day of our lives we can cope with the fact we have no time to connect as we are busy selling our own labour to maintain someone else's profit. I am not sure that I have ever felt community, but I believe that real community, art, or appreciation of nature can't be separated from our day to day lives. It sure doesn't start with paying over a hundred dollars so that once a year you can get together with hundreds of people you otherwise would never talk to, even though they might be your neighbours. These constructed communities pose no real threat to the forces which prevent genuine community. In fact I believe they enable us to put up with living isolated, monotonous lives because we have these one-off events such as Hillside to look forward to.

"The feeling at Hillside is very local which I really appreciate, because it feels like a real community,"
- a review found on the Hillside website

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

This year I snuck into Hillside. I overheard many conversations from people saying things such as "This is the best day of every year, where we all come together, enjoy the outdoors, and really build a community bigger than any of us." Overhearing people say this broke my heart. That all sounds nice to me, and in fact in my day to day life I strive for a sense of community, fun, nature, and many of the things which Hillside attempts to sell to us. However, Hillside is a constructed community: there are

Constructed communities pose no real threat to the forces which prevent genuine community.

The intention of cultural events like Hillside are actually to remake the aesthetic of Guelph in the image of those who control it.

A FOLK FESTIVAL?

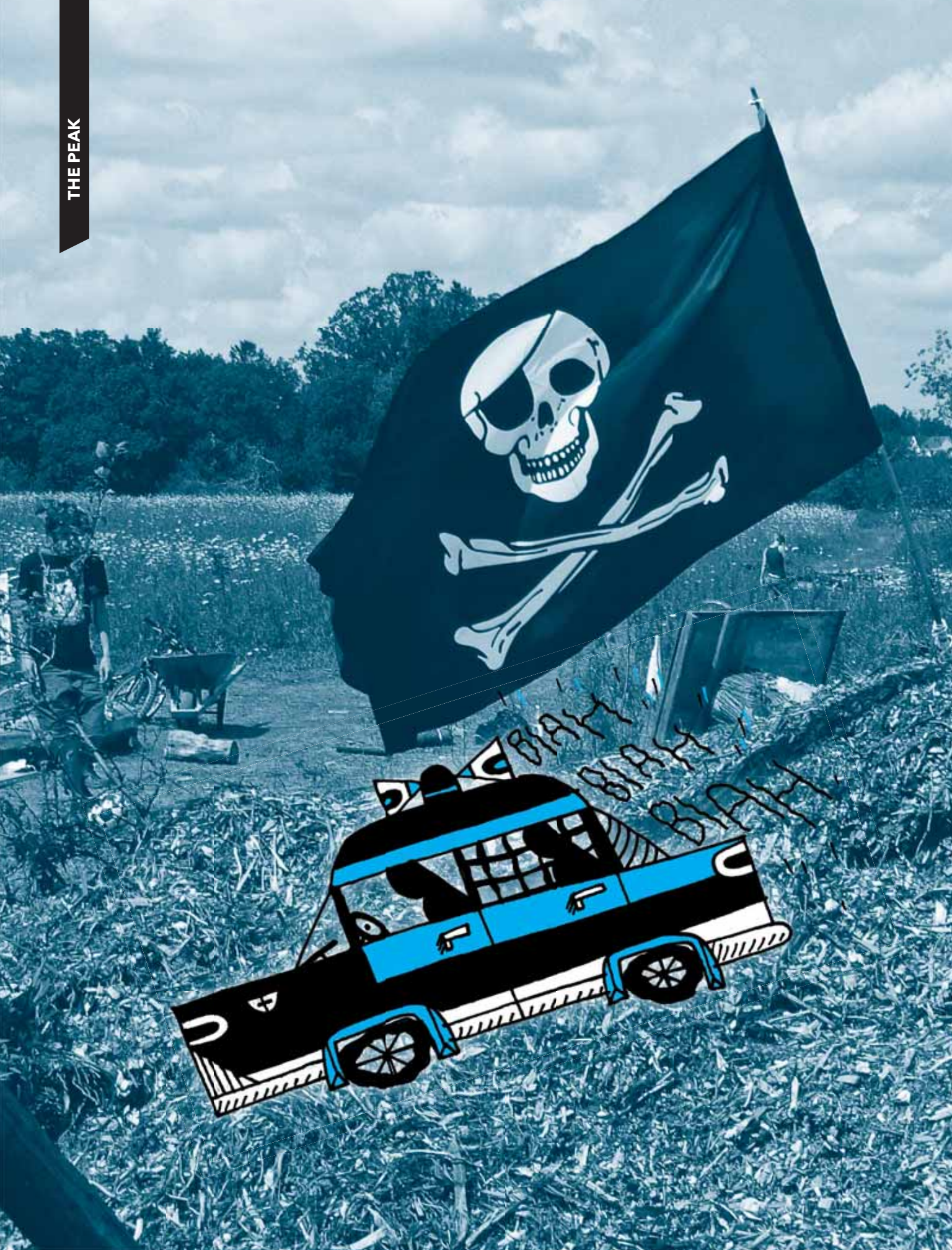
Hillside promotes itself as an intimate environment—a local, small event. Hillside is a part of a network called the Ontario Coalition of Folk Festivals. Even if the word folk isn't always used, the flavour presented by Hillside is that of a folk festival. Folk music is the music of the people; the common-person's music. I believe Folk music to be more of a happening, or a sharing, than a performance of a song. At Hillside, this is far from the case: Not only are the headliners big celebrity performers, who are hardly common people, and there is a distinct separation between performer and audience, symbolized by a huge stage and fancy lights. Sure, there are a few workshops here and there, and some sharing, but everything about the stage, and the overall event, has nothing to do with folk traditions. There is a hierarchy at Hillside, and that is the very hierarchy that ruins what is special about folk music.

A GENTRIFYING FORCE

When the Fab Five come around, it is important to note who is not in attendance. When the Jazz Festival takes over downtown, nowhere in the crowd are the familiar faces or characters of downtown Guelph. Rather, just like that green wall in downtown which painted over the "Vote For Nobody" mural, the lives and stories occupying downtown become those of the affluent, rich, and often white. This is no different of Hillside. Many people say that hillside is "soo Guelph" and that Hillside demonstrates exactly what Guelph is about. However,

the intentions of cultural events like Hillside are actually to remake the aesthetic of Guelph in the image of those who control it. City planners, politicians and police love events like Hillside, as it paints Guelph as a peaceful city, full of white, middle class people who get along. It ignores the social tensions, the reality of Guelph, which includes the conflicts between the developers and those who can't afford their rising rents, between drug users seeking refuge and police, between the white rich downtown residents and the racialized folks who they are pushing to the outskirts of the city. Not only does Hillside attempt to cover up these tensions, it attempts to erase them by making more space for people on one side to exist and come together under the guise of community, friendship and all-around peaceful and good intentions while forgetting who is pushed away (people of colour, poor people, drug users and so on).

Other concerns raised about Hillside include the destruction done to the land, the high price, and the corporate presence, but even if it were a free event that that didn't damage the environment, the above critiques would still apply. For me, the bottom line is that the City of Guelph is unlikely to ever endorse a type of festivity that doesn't have gentrifying effects. I suppose in a way Hillside is "soo Guelph" in that it is a gentrifying machine, existing under the guise of hipster aesthetics, organic food and "local flavour." [△](#)



LEFT A pirate flag flies at the Occupation of the Hanlon Creek Business Park in 2009. The new nuisance by-law aims to stop actions such as these. Photo: Bryan Hill

ILLUSTRATIONS The Friendly Organ

The Only Nuisance I Know: The Corporation of The City Of Guelph

How will the proposed Public Nuisance By-law be implemented, and who will it affect? Here's a breakdown of the by-law and its potential impacts on marginalized communities. by Devin Foley

ON SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2012, THE CORPORATION OF the City of Guelph released a news statement announcing the proposal of a new by-law that would regulate activities deemed a “Public Nuisance” by attending officers and by-law officers. It states that, “The bylaw, as drafted, would provide tools for [bylaw] officers to address minor, unwanted behaviour or activities occurring on City-owned property.”¹

On September 17th, 2012, City Council unanimously voted for the initial concept of a Nuisance By-Law, proposed by By-Law Compliance Manager Doug Godfrey. He claims the by-law was “thrown together” from bits and pieces of other, similar by-laws implemented in other municipalities.

This leaves two assumptions on the behalf of the author: either City Council does not take their jobs as the representatives of the residents of Guelph seriously or they do not care for the protection of the democratic rights of the residents of Guelph.

As written, the by-law is so ambiguous that the interpretation of the by-law could classify any activity as a “nuisance” – and therefore in violation of the by-law – if deemed so by the attending Officer or By-Law Officer. Point (a) under the definition of a “Nuisance Party” clarifies “Disorderly Conduct” and point (i) under the section “Conduct Affecting Other Persons” clarifies “Cause trouble or annoyance to, or accost, any other person” as being in violation of the by-law. These are not clear definitions,

and are able to be widely interpreted by attending Police Officers or By-Law Enforcement Officers. While the rest of the by-law raises many legal red-flags, these two definitions are clearly inappropriate.

Equally as worrisome as the by-law itself is the transparency of City Council's actions. While Godfrey claimed “Public education is our first course of action”¹, the following “action” has been put forth in informing the public:

- ➔ Two related articles published from the City of Guelph Newsroom
- ➔ Seven related articles (not including Opinion articles) published by the Guelph Mercury
- ➔ Four related articles (not including Opinion articles) published by the Guelph Tribune
- ➔ One Corporation of the City of Guelph Facebook status update

Most of these publications have been heavily biased towards the acceptance of the by-law and have taken little to no critical look at the repercussions of the by-law's implementation. While it has since been addressed since the author's personal comment on the aforementioned Facebook status update, the original link to a reviewable copy of the bylaw on the original newsroom release was incredibly difficult to navigate. It was buried in the Operations, Transit and Emergency Services

¹ http://guelph.ca/newsroom_display.cfm?itemID=81492

Committee Agendas & Minutes page, hidden under the Addendums links, at the very bottom of the Minutes of the Council meeting.² This is far from the level of accessibility that should be expected from a council promoting its interest in public education. The majority of information released in articles claims that the by-law is to help deal with out-of-control parties, while Godfrey himself has stated that there have been no history of parties that would warrant a by-law of this nature. More importantly, it appears to be a red herring to dissent upon a greater threat to the modus operandi of City Council; protesting. Under “Conduct Affecting

The majority of information released in articles claims that the by-law is to help deal with out-of-control parties, while Godfrey himself has stated that there have been no history of parties that would warrant a by-law of this nature.

Other Persons”, point (e) prohibits individuals from the ability to “Distribute, display or discard any handbill, notice, circular, advertisement, promotional item or sample”, and point (r) prohibits anyone to “Host or participate in a public rally or protest that exceeds 24 consecutive hours.” This is a clear violation of the democratic right to engage the public in free speech. Under these conditions, a protest would be a gathering of people with no display or communication of their purpose. What’s more, it states under “Administration”;

12. In respect of City Land, or applicable parts thereof, the Executive Director, in his/her sole discretion considering the best interests of the City, is authorized to:

- (a) Issue and post or refuse to issue and post Signs permitting activities that would otherwise be prohibited or restricted by this by-law;
- (b) Issue and post or refuse to issue and post Signs prohibiting or restricting activities that would otherwise be permitted pursuant to this by-law;
- (c) On Signs, make permissions, prohibitions and restrictions of activities subject to such conditions, including, without limitation, conditions as to time, location, area, equipment, number of participants, types of activities, securing of other necessary approvals, indemnification and insurance coverage, as the Executive Director may find to be appropriate; and
- (d) Remove or alter Signs without notice.

This could completely outlaw the organization of protests, and signs could be posted in “Hot Spots” where public visibility is highest, or areas of public concern where, say, controversial development is taking place (as was the case with the Hanlon Creek Business Park occupation.) By restricting activities (which is also undefined and could extend to anything under the sole discretion of the Executive Director) and number of participants, it effectively gives “tools” to the city to completely eliminate any resistance to unwanted or unwarranted actions of Council.

The by-law also states under “Administration”;

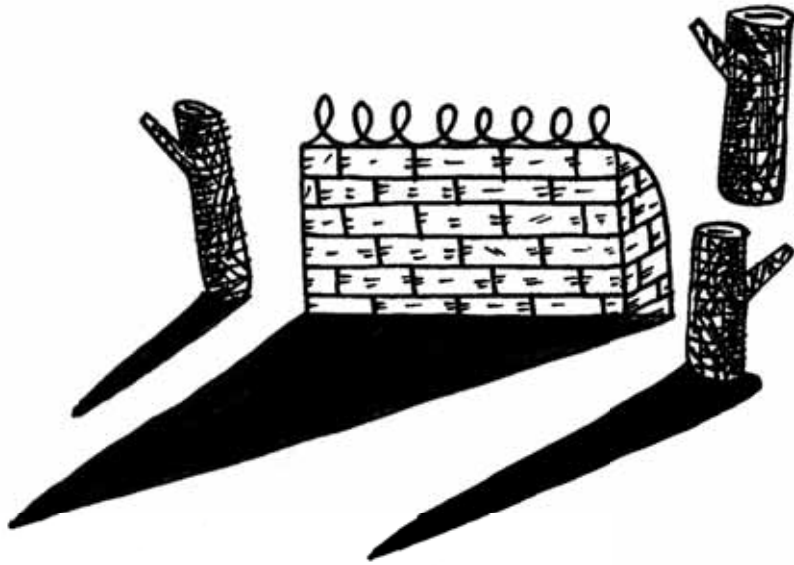
10. In respect of City Land, or applicable parts thereof, the Executive Director, in his/her sole discretion, considering the purposes of this by-law and the best interests of the City, is authorized to:

- (a) Issue or refuse to issue Permits permitting activities that would otherwise be prohibited or restricted by this by-law;
- (b) Charge fees, as established by Council, for the issuance of Permits;
- (c) Make Permits subject to such conditions, including, without limitation, conditions as to time, location, area, equipment, number of participants, types of activities, securing of other necessary approvals, indemnification and insurance coverage, as the Executive Director may find to be appropriate; and
- (d) Revoke, void or alter Permits without notice.

The irony in this is that protesters must ask permission from the City in order to protest against the City. They must also pay a fee to do so. Furthermore, this permission can be revoked at anytime without notice, landing the party in question with the exact repercussions as one who did not go through the City’s process. This is highly counterintuitive.

Furthermore, under “Conduct Affecting City Property”, it states it is in violation to (i) “Camp, dwell or lodge” and (j) “Place, install or erect any temporary or permanent structure, including any tent or booth.” Not only does this make protests similar to Occupy impossible, but it affects something else; homelessness. While we do not have nearly as great a problem with homelessness in Guelph as is experienced in other communities, there are still many people throughout the year that go without somewhere sheltered to rest and must resort to other ways to shelter themselves at night. This is especially important in the winter months. Anything from a tent to a cardboard box could be interpreted as a temporary structure, and the mere act of “dwelling” on City Land – in or out of a temporary structure, such as sleeping on a park

² <http://tinyurl.com/apwgqwu>



bench – would be in violation of the by-law. This is counterproductive in the deliverance of human rights and of the elimination of poverty within our city especially when you consider that a single offence warrants a maximum fine of 10,000 dollars for a first offence and 25,000 dollars for succeeding offences for everything that has been previously discussed. Contrary to what Doug Godfrey has claimed the inability to pay fines can and will lead to the imprisonment of individuals who are incapable of paying their debt to the city, meaning we as a community are increasing the risk of people's incarceration for simply being poor.

Guelph proclaims on its own website that in 2009 it was declared Canada's safest city. Despite this, City Council has expressed that there is an imminent need to pass this by-law out of concerns for public safety. "Police Chief Bryan Larkin said while the public nuisance bylaw was not spurred by the local Occupy protest, the wider Occupy movement 'created a lot of discussion at the provincial, national and international level from a policing perspective because it was a new way of protesting,' Larkin said while the organizers and participants in Occupy Guelph did not cause any problems, that protest did cause officials to consider how they might deal with similar events in the future."³ This also seems like contradictory reasoning; there is no precedence to warrant this sort of retaliation.

There are other concerns contained within the pages of the by-law. For starters, the majority of specific regulated activities, such as littering, noise nuisances, public intoxication, public urination, open burns or fireworks, tampering with city flora, loitering in a washroom, blocking a sidewalk (and it does not specify willfully), vandalism or the depositing of snow are already regulated by by-laws with their own set fines. The inclusion of these in the

by-law, however, ups the penalty to the maximum of 10,000 dollars for the first offence and 25,000 dollars for succeeding offences. Other issues such as participating in a fight or knocking over or tampering with a Canada Post mailbox – while regulated under the Criminal Code – do not need to be included in an omnibus, and if the City wishes for these issues to be addressed by By-Law Enforcement, it could very well separate them each into a by-law of their own. The by-law also mentions that being in possession of a weapon is a violation, which it clarifies as "any firearm as defined in the City's Firearm Discharge By-law # (1994)-14738 as amended." As this is already regulated under a by-law of its own, it seems redundant to re-regulate it. Also concerning is that the by-law may be amended without notice to include weapons that are not firearms, and may just be considered weapons.

There is absolutely no need for all of these activities to be grouped together. A few other interesting points... under "Enforcement," it states:

18. Each Officer is hereby authorized to order any person the Officer believes to be in contravention of this by-law or to have contravened this by-law to:

- (a) Desist from the activity constituting or contributing to such contravention;
- (b) Where the activity occurs on City Land, remove from the City Land anything under the care or control of such person which the Officer believes is or was involved in such contravention; and
- (c) Where the activity occurs on City Land, leave the City Land.

This seems to imply that the individual or individuals in question could be exiled from all city property, and if they didn't have a private residence

³<http://tinyurl.com/bkgq35q>

to go to they could be forced to leave the city limits. This is especially problematic if they are without a fixed address. The mere definition of “City Land” as “land owned or operated by the City, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes every highway, park and public square owned or operated by the City, and includes any buildings, structures and equipment located thereon” effectively makes all public land shared by all individuals the private property of the Corporation of the City of Guelph.

Under “Conduct Affecting City Property” it says: (g) “Dispose of, cause the release of, dump, drain or discharge any material or substance, whether solid or liquid and whether toxic, hazardous (as defined by the Environmental Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.19, as amended or replaced) or otherwise, on or into any surface or soil or the waters of any fountain, regardless of the place of origin and the means of transmission or transportation of said material or substance” and under (k); “Enter the water in any fountain.”

Dear Council: This is about the bubbles, isn’t it? One day you’ll have to recognize that adding bubbles and/or food colouring to the fountain in St. George’s Square is something Guelph likes. It makes people happy, and we’ve been safely playing in them for years. (Look for SeeingBubblesInTheFountain on facebook.)

The primary purpose of this by-law seems clear: to muzzle freedom of speech and free democracy and to further criminalize the poor. The by-law has no purpose in the interests of the residents of Guelph. The City claims the Nuisance By-Law will give its By-Law Enforcement further tools to deal with issues that can only currently be dealt with by Police Officers, to avoid the use of the criminal code. This seems to give By-Law officers more resources and power to place debilitating financial debts on people, and using the threat of financial burdens to criminalize actions which don’t fall under the criminal code. These By-Laws largely do not warrant the use of the criminal code in the first place and it is obvious targeted people will just face more harassment as a result. Effectively Doug Godfrey, or “Executive Director”, would get his own little private police force.

Doug Godfrey has suggested that the by-law is being implemented because the Municipal Act grants municipalities the power to create one. It is irresponsible to administer laws simply “because one can.”

We must make them throw the by-law out. △





SMASH

PACIFISM



Illustration by Zig Zag
For more thoughts
like the ones
explored in this
article, check out
Zig Zag's "A Critical
Analysis of Gandhi
and King" found
on the Warrior
Publications website.

Peaceful Protests Profit from History of Militant Resistance

Political movements like Idle No More benefit from the diversity
of tactics of the grassroots movements that support them. By Zig Zag

Republished from warriorpublications.org

"Unbelievable how chicken the police are to remove these people from blocking the railway. If it was anybody but natives they would have been arrested a week ago." Letter posted by Gerry, "First Nation blockade in Sarnia coming down," Canadian Press, January 2nd, 2013.

ANY TIME THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT NATIVE blockade or occupation, there are demands for its immediate removal by angry citizens. During Oka, 1990, and Six Nations 2006, for example, mobs of non-Natives rallied and sometimes rioted demanding that the military intervene to end the disputes.

Likewise, judges have scolded police forces who did not immediately enforce injunctions that they issued against blockades or occupations. A recent example was seen in Sarnia, Ontario, where Natives blockaded a CN rail for several days as part of the Idle No More mobilization. In late December, Ontario Superior Court Judge David Brown issued an injunction against the blockade. Sarnia police never did enforce it, and instead the blockade was voluntarily dismantled by protesters.

Then, on January 5th, 2013, the same judge issued an emergency injunction against a train blockade carried out by Tyendinaga Mohawks. Citing tactical reasons, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) did not intervene, and the blockade was voluntarily taken down after a few hours by the Mohawks.

Last spring, B.C. Supreme Court Judge Mark McEwan criticized the RCMP for failing to enforce an injunction against the blockade of the Gitksan Treaty Society (GTS) by grassroots Gitksan (after Elmer Derrick, head of the GTS, signed a multi-million dollar deal with Enbridge). The blockade, which began in early December, 2011, lasted for several months and only ended when a deal was reached whereby an audit would be undertaken of the GTS finances.

Many Idle No More (INM) rallies have seen little police presence, aside from redirecting traffic, even when several hundred people are marching. Blockades of

highways and city intersections have lasted at times for three to four hours. Hundreds have "flash mobbed" into shopping malls, causing minor disruptions to business-as-usual, with little police response.

Some INM participants see this as proof that "peaceful" protests are effective, that police don't know how to respond to them, etc. But it would be good to remember that the Occupy protests of 2011, even though being almost entirely nonviolent, were squashed with court injunctions and the frequent deployment of riot police. Even the first Occupy rally in Vancouver, on October 15th, 2011, saw scores of riot cops in the streets.

What all of these people—the reactionary citizens, judges, and the naive INM participants—don't realize is that the reason the state and its police forces "fail to act" is that they fear the greater potential disruption that Indigenous peoples are capable of. The state does not want to radicalize a passive reformist movement through overt repression, and will tolerate acts of civil disobedience (including temporary blockades of infrastructure).

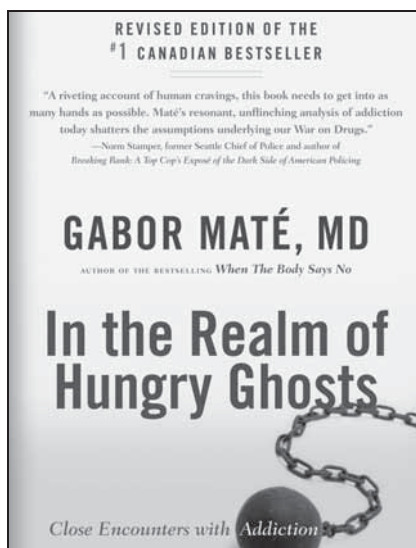
The greater potential for disruption is not merely a phantom menace, but has been seen before. During the Oka Crisis of 1990, for example, it was the widespread and militant solidarity actions carried out by grassroots people that limited the state's military options in ending the standoff. These solidarity actions included protests, blockades of highways, railways and bridges, occupations of government offices, as well as sabotage of railway bridges and power lines.

The state knows that Indigenous populations are, in rural areas especially, strategically located to cause massive economic disruption. This includes blocking or cutting highways, railways and power

lines that cross through Indigenous territories and reserve lands.

In addition, the Indigenous grassroots has demonstrated a capability for militant as well as armed resistance, as the examples of Oka 1990, Gustafsen Lake and Ipperwash 1995, Burnt Church 1999-2000, Kahnatesake (Oka) 2004, Six Nations 2006, etc., clearly show. So while some INM'ers believe they are leading a "peaceful" Indigenous Rights Revolution, they are actually benefiting from the militant grassroots resistance that preceded them, gained through blood, sweat, and tears, assaults, arrests, and in some cases death. Perhaps if they knew their history better, they would understand this. [Δ](#)





In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts

By MaryCarl Guiao

IN THE REALM OF HUNGRY GHOSTS BY GABOR Maté is a compelling tale of addiction, abuse, and compassion. Maté is a practicing physician in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, and he based the book on two decades of personal experience and countless interviews with his subjects. The focus of the text is addiction but it covers everything from addiction to chemical drugs, to the author's own addiction to classical music CDs. This Canadian best-seller is written with exceptional elegance and style despite the depressing and sometimes horrific stories told within. This book would appeal to both a professional audience interested in medical and treatment issues, but also to people who live with "hardcore" addictions seeking to put their own experiences into context, develop an understanding of their illness and a path to healing.

The author makes it clear that conventional treatment and recovery are not exactly the end goal of his work. It has more to do with compassion - he strives to let these people be who they are without judgment, and in the process helps them to reduce the harm they would otherwise inflict on themselves and the local community. Canada's ground-breaking safe injection site is housed in the same building as Maté's office and is an example of this line of thinking: if you are going to inject yourself with drugs, at the very least you should have clean needles and

REVIEW

medical staff nearby. He takes issue with the punitive nature of Canada's drug laws and a society that "ostracizes" those that become addicted to chemical drugs. The non-profit Portland Hotel Society where he is employed offers a range of programs designed to meet the basic human needs of those who live and work on Vancouver's infamous Hastings Street. Basic housing, meals, medical and dental care are the base services offered, and when the Society can afford it, they also organize camping trips, movie nights, and other social events to provide alternative experiences to some of Canada's most abused, shunned and forgotten inhabitants.

Vermin, disease and death are all too common in the Downtown Eastside and the opening pages alone recount details of over ten lives lost to drug addiction. The book is a mix of anecdotes, retold stories, and hard facts. Almost every patient of Maté's is a convicted criminal; more than half are diagnosed with a mental illness, and a third are HIV-positive. But amidst the heart-wrenching details of poverty-stricken Hastings Street, the reader is struck with a sense of awe in how the book portrays these homeless, and in many ways helpless, individuals as human, and worthy of dignity and compassionate care. Maté himself remarks how at times he feels "full of disapproval and judgment", but he also tries to recognize that the contradiction in his personal views originates within him, and that there is a power imbalance in the role he plays in their lives, and the role they play in his.

It is this element of self-reflection that makes the book groundbreaking and effective in facilitating healing. While the first one hundred plus pages focus on crack, heroin and meth addictions, the later pages offer insight into the author's own "high-status" addiction: the purchase of classical CDs, of all things. The switch is not only helpful to lighten the tone of an otherwise heart-wrenching subject

matter, but it is also a very persuasive way to influence the reader to self-reflect on their own addictions. The narrative allows one to appreciate how they too are influenced by many of the same primal urges of instant gratification that drive addiction, and to reflect on how it is that some of us get addicted to crack, while others seek pleasure in food, sex, or buying things like classical CDs. The tell-tale signs of addiction, like hiding details from friends and family, are confessed by the author in the context of his addiction to buying CDs in a way that encourages the reader to deepen their understanding about their lives and addictive tendencies. Aside from being an interesting literary style, it is an incredibly powerful way to generate in the reader a compassionate understanding of the ways in which they too could have been a crack addict if their life had been slightly different, and most especially if they were more frequently prevented from accessing opportunities to gain thorough and compassionate self-understanding.

Maté is drawn to classical CDs partly because he was exposed to them early on. Might the addicts in this book have been drawn to something else if their childhood involved different influences, cues, and precursors? Δ



The Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity Presents:



The EveryBody Conference, is a convergence of voices building towards a community in which we can address systemic barriers that prevent us* from having autonomy over what happens to our bodies, while also exploring grassroots movements that are working to reclaim that power. This is a coming together of diverse voices where we are cultivating a culture of care with and for each other.

*as students, immigrants, sex workers, women of colour, trans folks, survivors, people with disabilities, etc...

Event is Scooter and Wheelchair Accessible. For more information check out our website at www.theeverybodyconference.wordpress.com or email us at grcged@gmail.com

**THE GLORY OF GUELPH
WAS UNPARALLELED,
BUT LIKE ALL EARTHLY GLORIES,
WAS DESTINED TO PASS AWAY.**

**– SAMUEL RIFE
EARLY SETTLER OF WELLINGTON COUNTY**

